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# A HISTORY

OF THE

# NATIONAL CAPITAL

FROM ITS FOUNDATION THROUGH THE PERIOD OF THE ADOPTION OF THE ORGANIC ACT

BY

WILHELMUS BOGART BRYAN

VOL. I

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# A HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN OF THE RESIDENCE MOVEMENT

A VITAL consideration in selecting the location of the seat of government of the United States was convenience of access to all portions of the country. It was to be central as to population and as to territory. Moreover, it was to be on a navigable river connecting the Atlantic on the one side with the great western country on the other. There was another element. The jurisdiction of the general government must be supreme. There must be no divided sovereignty, no state to exercise equal authority with the general government, or in fact, any authority except federal where the government was to be placed. It is not a matter of surprise that the first emphasis was placed almost at the outset of this discussion upon centrality. For in the year 1783, when this question first arose, and which witnessed the signing of the treaty of peace between the United States and England, and the close of the struggle of the colonies for independence, which had begun eight years before, communication between the different portions of the country was slow and difficult.

To-day the people of Philadelphia in point of time are as near the Pacific coast as the residents of that city in the year 1783 were to Boston. Then stage coaches, pursuing their lumbering way over roads that were rough and dangerous, went at the rate of about two miles an hour. As one result of the state of transportation, people travelled but little, and their isolation made them provincial and local in their feelings and

in their ideas. This latter condition had an influence upon practically all the public questions of the day. In fact, a national spirit was still feeble and well represented by the articles of confederation which had been ratified by all the states less than two years before, and which jealously retained to the individual states all the authority and power, and left the confederacy a mere shadow of a strong and effective government.

The provincial and also sectional tendencies were so strong that for a time it seemed probable the confederacy would fly apart into a number of independent states. The New England states failed to appreciate the importance to the south and southwest of the free navigation of the Mississippi, just as the value of foreign commercial relations and the fishing rights on the Newfoundland banks were not grasped by the people outside of that territory. Then, too, the unwillingness of the states laying claim to the crown lands in the western country to recognize that they should be made a part of the common fund, delayed for four years, or until 1781, the complete ratification of the articles of confederation. Each state also insisted upon its own customs duties without regard to the interests of adjoining states. Then there was the deep-seated and violently active feeling of the staple states against the commercial states, so vital a factor in American thought that it lay at the foundation of the two great parties that first divided politically the people of America.

"There is a fatal opposition to continental views," writes Hamilton to Washington, March 17, 1783, in describing the sentiment in that body of which he was a member. He speaks of two classes of men in congress in a letter written a month later to Washington, "one attached to states, the other to continental policies. The last have been strenuous advocates for funding the public debt upon solid securities, the former have given every opposition in their power." [1]

It is only in harmony with their general attitude, which may be attributed in part at least to ignorance of conditions away from home as much as to anything else, that the members

[1] Correspondence. American Revolution. Sparks, Vol. 4.

of the continental congress, as well as those of the first congress under the constitution, displayed local prejudice and narrowness when they came to consider the question of choosing a place which should be the seat of the general government. The jealousies of the states found expression in one of the compromises of the constitution, which gave equal representation to large and small states in the senate of the United States. Before slavery had emerged from being merely a local issue, and before the final alignment into political parties had fully taken place, the sentiment of the country was divided on sectional lines, the south against the north. If it had not been for the fear that the advantage of the location of the national capital would be seized upon in the interests of either one or the other of the two sections, the fixing of a permanent residence site would probably have been deferred until after the machinery of the new government had been devised and set in motion, and certainly until the public revenue could be known and the financial resources of the government tested. For this reason mainly, as well as because of the promptings of local interests and ambition, the choice of a permanent seat was always "insinuating itself in all great national questions." [1]

The advantages to be derived as a source of local influence and revenue from such a centre as the capital of the nation were fully recognized at a time and by a people that were actively entering upon a career of land development on a scale that was only equalled by the greatness of the territory. But it can readily be understood the physical difficulties of communication gave the mere geography of the site an importance that was very real at the time, and which also served to give a sharper edge to the blade of sectional controversy.

The argument for centrality within an area confined to the narrow fringe of territory east of the Alleghanies held the chief place in the discussions of the national body, but the

[1] Annals of Congress. 1st Cong., 2d Sess., May 31, 1790, p. 1622. John Bach McMaster characterized the debate on the residence bill in the first session of the first congress as "one of the longest and the most acrimonious the members had yet been engaged in." History of the People of the United States, Vol. 1, p. 555.

individualistic and sectional attitude of the states is aptly illustrated by the form in which this subject was first introduced.

In the spring of the year 1783 the continental congress made proclamation that the war with England was over, although actual hostilities ceased after the operations in Georgia, in the early part of 1782, and had not been resumed. But before peace was formally concluded congress was asked to fix upon a place for its permanent seat.

The subject had no doubt been in the minds of men, and had been spoken of previous to this time. As early as November, 1779, Benjamin Rush, then a member of congress, writing from Philadelphia to Colonel George Morgan of Princeton, N.J., informed him that "some of the members of Congress were talking of purchasing a few square miles of territory near that village, wherein to erect public offices and buildings for a permanent house." [1]

The first recorded action was taken by the trustees of the corporation of Kingston, N.Y., on the 29th of January, 1783, nine days after the preliminary articles of peace were signed in Paris. The news, however, was not received in this country until March 23, 1783, but it had been confidently expected.[2]

The Kingston town authorities had then decided "to ascertain the sense of the town as to whether it would be agreeable to them to have the Honorable the Congress of the United States come and reside in their town." [3]

In the course of a few days it was ascertained that the sentiment of the citizens was favorable, and the trustees sent a memorial to the legislature of the state of New York, praying that "their estate be erected into a separate district for the Honorable the Congress of the United States." [4]

Authority was asked to grant to congress one square mile within the limits of the town. In response to this request,

[1] Princeton Collection, Library of Princeton. Quoted in The Continental Congress at Princeton, Thomas L. Collins, Princeton, 1908.

[2] Critical Period of American History, p. 51. John Fiske, Boston, 1894.

[3] History of Kingston, New York. By Marcus Shoonmaker, 1888.

[4] The same.

the state legislature on the 14th of March, 1783, adopted a resolution that the inhabitants of the corporation of the township of Kingston have offered to grant to congress "a sufficient quantity of land within the said township to secure to Congress a place of residence adequate to their dignity with all the privileges which are in their power to grant and to subject themselves within the bounds of the said township to such regulations for the purpose of giving an exempt jurisdiction to Congress as in the judgment of the legislature can constitutionally be provided, for securing and perpetuating as well such exempt jurisdiction, as any corporate rights, which the legislature may judge proper to grant to congress."[1] This application was formally granted by the legislature.

On the 22d of September, upon the suggestion of William Floyd and Alexander Hamilton, delegates of the state in congress, the grant was increased to two square miles. The 12th day of May, 1783, the corporation of Annapolis, Maryland, adopted a resolution which recited that "it being represented to the corporation that the welfare and interests of the United States requires that congress should have a fixed place of residence with jurisdiction and executive and judicial powers over the same and over all persons inhabiting and residing within the district," it was decided that the citizens be consulted at a meeting, May 14, 1783, to ascertain whether they would agree to make an offer to congress of land, "and consent to be subject to such powers and jurisdiction." A unanimous approval was voted.

The corporation then invoked the aid of the legislature to authorize the tender by the town of 300 acres.[2] By resolution of May 25, 1783, the Maryland house of delegates acceded to this request, and in communicating to congress this offer mentioned among other advantages of Annapolis for such a purpose that it "is more central than any other city or

[1] The same. The resolution of the legislature and the action of the town authorities are preserved in the papers of the continental congress, in the library of congress, also the action of the Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia and Pennsylvania legislatures of the same period.

[2] History of Annapolis. E. S. Riley, 1887.

town in the federal states." It was recommended that the general assembly present "the state-house and public circle in the city of Annapolis (exclusive of the schoolhouse and court-house of Ann Arundel County, and the loan office standing in the said circle) to the Honorable Congress for their use." Also that it was the unanimous opinion of the house that the "General Assembly present to Congress the building and grounds in the said city appropriated for the residence of the governor of their state for the habitation of their President. . . . that it offers to Congress to erect at the expense of the state thirteen dwellings for the residence of the delegates of each of the thirteen confederated states, and that a sum not to exceed 30,000 pounds be applied for that purpose." [1]

The next day this action was approved by the state senate, and May 30, congress was formally notified. Such an offer was referred to in the proceedings of the continental congress of June 4, 1783, and at that time it was directed to be sent with the Kingston offer to the executives of the various states with a notice that in the following October the matter would be considered by congress.

In the event congress should "make choice of any part of the state of New Jersey for the place of the permanent residence," the New Jersey legislature on the 19th of June, 1783, declared the state "will invest them with such jurisdiction, authority and power over a district of twenty square miles as may be required by congress, as necessary for the honor, dignity, convenience and safety of that august body." The state further agreed to grant 30,000 pounds in specie "for the purpose of procuring lands and erecting buildings thereon for the suitable accommodation of Congress."

This offer was accompanied by the tender of a site by the freeholders and inhabitants of the western part of the township of Nottingham in the county of Burlington, and at the head of the navigation of the Delaware River. The resolution of the township authorities June 16, 1783, recites that "it appears consistent with the welfare and true interests of the United

[1] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 46, p. 15.

States that Congress should have a fixed place of residence with jurisdiction and certain powers within the same, and, whereas, we have been informed that great offers have been made by the States of New York and Maryland to induce Congress to make their respective states the permanent residence, etc." Further, they offer "to subject ourselves to such exempt jurisdiction as they may, in their wisdom, think proper to grant." [1]

A few days later the state of Virginia sent in its tender dated June 28, 1783, when by action of its legislature it offered the town of Williamsburg to congress and to "present the palace, the capitol, and all the public buildings, and 300 acres of land adjoining the said city, together with a sum of money not exceeding 100,000 pounds this states currency, to be expended in erecting thirteen hotels for the use of the delegates in Congress."

"Also," it is stipulated, "the state will cede a district contiguous to the said city not exceeding five miles square with such exempt jurisdiction within the said limits as the inhabitants residing therein shall consent to yield to congress."

The legislature also offered to cede a like district at any place on the Potomac and to appropriate a sum not to exceed 100,000 pounds for erecting said hotels and will also purchase 100 acres of land for the purpose of erecting public buildings. It is further stipulated that Virginia will unite with the state of Maryland and cede land opposite to that ceded by Maryland on the Potomac, but in the event congress locates on the north side, its proportion would be 40,000 pounds, Maryland to supply the deficiency.

The prominence given to the right of jurisdiction conferred on congress in all these offers stands out in striking contrast to the omission to place any emphasis, except in the case of Annapolis, on the locations in their geographical relations to the rest of the country. In the subsequent consideration covering a period of some seven years, this relation of the two great phases of the subject, namely, jurisdiction and geography, was completely reversed and the tide of debate was almost

[1] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 46, p. 35.

entirely confined to the latter. Such a result was due to the general acquiescence in the proposition that congress should have powers of that character. On the other hand, the location of the residence stirred a variety of conflicting interests and aroused the strong feeling of distrust and jealousy that marked the attitude of the agricultural states south of the Susquehanna, and of the states to the north, where commerce and trade was a growing interest. Where the seat of government should be permanently located was finally fought out on lines that separated the northern from the southern states, and precisely about in the same latitude where nearly three quarters of a century later the line of cleavage came that arrayed on opposite sides the hostile hosts of the Civil War.

The first mention in the annals of the national legislature of the subject of a permanent residence, as the popular phrase came to be, although Madison objected to the word permanent, for he said, "our acts are not those of the Medes and Persians, unalterable," is in the record of the action of congress of June 4, 1783, relative to the tenders from New York and Maryland of sites for the proposed national capital. A day in October was named when the subject would be considered, but before that time arrived, an event occurred which provided what was looked upon in that day as a forcible illustration of the importance and necessity of making congress at the seat of government independent of any other authority. The aptness of this experience as an illustration is shown by the emphasis placed upon it in the subsequent discussions, but as will be brought out as the narrative proceeds, the jurisdiction question was not at any time one of the contested issues in contemporary thought, nor did it evoke any serious opposition.

The event in question was the gathering of soldiers of the Pennsylvania line about the state house in Philadelphia when congress was in session for the purpose of enforcing their claims for pay long overdue. The discontent in the army, which had been for a year and a half inactive following the armed truce which practically began after the battle of Yorktown, was general.

The disbandment of the army by furloughs had begun, although the British had not evacuated New York. But there was no money to pay the men, and it was imperative that further demands upon the slender resources of the government should be cut off as rapidly as possible. The situation of the army was desperate, officers and men alike saw only the dismal prospect of leaving the service without the pay due them and in debt, and they felt their services were deserving of at least the pay to which they were justly entitled. There were other creditors besides the soldiers, those who furnished supplies to the army and had in other ways exchanged their commodities for the promises of the government or rather of congress. The latter body went to the extent of its powers to procure the means to satisfy the public creditors by calling on the states to pay their quota. But this appeal had not been heeded.

The Pennsylvania troops in the barracks in Philadelphia had, early in June, 1783, expressed their discontent by presenting a petition to congress to which that body made no response. The feeling was quieted down by the influence of some of the members of congress, who personally went to the barracks and conferred with the soldiers. This had hardly been accomplished when a number of soldiers of the Pennsylvania line in barracks at Lancaster, mutinied, and in spite of the commands and the entreaties of their officers, started for Philadelphia to demand from congress the money that was due them. The assertion was freely made at the time that the outbreaks both at Philadelphia and Lancaster were encouraged by the creditor class, generally, with the view of bringing such pressure to bear upon the national legislature as would result in forcing some provision for the payment of all claims against the government.

The mutineers left Lancaster, June 17, 1783, in command of a sergeant. Forty men dropped out while en route and eighty men were in the ranks when Philadelphia was reached. They were welcomed by their comrades of the Pennsylvania 20th Infantry, who shared with them their barracks.

The news of this movement had been brought to the city and to congress, and it was announced that the soldiers intended

to demand justice of congress, and it was also intimated they had designs upon the bank. On the day before the arrival of the soldiers in Philadelphia, congress appointed a committee to confer with the executive council of the state of Pennsylvania in session in the same building. The result was disappointing, as the council refused to provide any protection against this threatened attack on the ground that the militia of Philadelphia would probably not be willing to take up arms "before their resentment should be provoked by some actual outrage."

The committee, as Madison reports, was much displeased, and intimated that if the city would not support congress, it was high time to remove to some other place.[1]

On the 21st of June, the day after their arrival, the Lancaster contingent, reënforced by the men stationed at the barracks, the total strength being between 250 and 300 men, fully armed, proceeded to the state-house and surrounded that building where both congress and executive council of the state were in session. Another appeal for protection was made on behalf of congress to the state authorities, but without avail.

As it turned out, however, the soldiers attempted no violence, occasionally an individual among them used offensive words and pointed a musket at the windows of the halls of congress. In the language of a committee of congress they made "a disorderly and menacing appearance." When night came the soldiers went away, and congress, after having endeavored to preserve such remnants of its dignity as were left by remaining in session, decided, when it adjourned, to meet in Princeton, N.J., which it did some eight days later.

The president of congress, Elias Boundinot, in writing to his brother, said the council lacked backbone to call out the militia. He also adds that the politicial manœuvres in connection with the question of federal residence which was to be settled the coming fall were "unhinging grounds."[2] It was also said that the citizens considered the soldiers objects of pity rather

[1] Madison's Reports of Debates in the Congress of the Confederation, Vol. 2, p. 92.

[2] Continental Congress at Princeton. Thomas L. Collins.

than chastisement, and hence the doubt of the disposition of the militia.

Three days after the occurrence, congress left the city to meet in Princeton the 26th of June, and then apparently the full results of the spirit of indifference or hostility on the part of citizens of Philadelphia and the authorities of the state began to be realized, for it was quite evident that whatever else might happen, neither the city nor the state wished to lose congress. Independent of advantage of proximity to the seat of government of the United States, its presence meant a revenue estimated at $100,000 per annum.[1]

As early as July 2, 1783, less than a week after congress convened in Princeton, an effort was made to induce it to return to Philadelphia, but that body declined on the ground that it had been grossly insulted by armed soldiers, and that repeated applications without avail had been made to the executive council of Pennsylvania for protection. At that time the executive council took the place of a state legislature.[2]

General Washington characterized the mutineers as "recruits and soldiers of a day who have not borne the heat and burden of the war, and who can have in reality very few hardships to complain of."[3]

The day after congress left the city, the executive council decided to call out a guard. The leaders of the mutiny vanished, and the Lancaster contingent yielded and marched back to Lancaster. As the result of a court-martial, held by direction of General Washington to try those charged with complicity in this affair, two men were sentenced to death and four to receive corporal punishment, but all the convicted men were pardoned by congress.

The first and immediate result of the Philadelphia affair was to change the seat of government, or rather the meeting place of congress, as owing to the lack of sufficient buildings

[1] Ezra L. Hommedieu, member of congress from New York state to Governor Clinton, Aug. 15, 1783. Quoted by Collins.

[2] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 36, Vol. 2, pp. 163 and 165.

[3] Washington Letters. June 24, 1783. Sparks, Vol. 8, p. 545.

the offices of the government and its records did not follow congress in its flight. But the executive offices and the public archives were at that time a mere detail in comparison with congress, for the presence of that body and those who had business before it, constituted what was locally the important element in the seat of government. This shifting of the meeting place was the more marked, as with the exception of periods covering about two years, Philadelphia had been the capital city of the confederacy from the first session of congress in 1774 down to this time, a period of some nine years. Had it not been for the exigencies of the war, which made Philadelphia unsafe, it is not likely congress would have met in Baltimore, Lancaster and York, as it did at intervals during those two years.

The rest of the session of that year was completed in Princeton, and at the date of the next session in November, 1783, congress assembled at Annapolis, and in November, 1784, convened in Trenton, N.J. and two months later met in New York City, where it remained until it was succeeded by the congress of the constitution that held its first session there in the spring of 1789.

In the year and a half after leaving Philadelphia, congress sat in three places, but this moving about, which can in part be attributed to the lack of accommodations and to the consequent discomfort and inconvenience to the members, and which extended over a comparatively short space of time, was regarded as evidence of weakness in the government.

In the course of the debate in the convention which framed the constitution, it was declared by one of the speakers that "muteability of place had dishonored the Federal government." In fact, later on in the consideration of the residence site the effect on the government of having no established centre was used as an argument for a prompt determination of a question that was, from this point of view alone, regarded as of supreme consequence.

In Philadelphia, congress occupied the building now known as Independence Hall, and then used both by the municipal and

state authorities, for Philadelphia, like New York, was at that time the capital of the state. A room in Nassau Hall, Princeton College was used during the stay of congress in Princeton and was ample for the deliberations of a body with an average attendance of twenty-two. But there were deficiencies in other respects. Madison records that at Princeton the members were crowded too much either for comfort or to carry on the public business with advantage. "We were extremely put to, to get any quarters at all," he writes. "Dr. Jones and I are put into one bed in a room not more than ten feet square." [1]

"Without a single accommodation for writing," he stated to Jefferson, "save in a position that scarcely admits the use of my limbs." He calls attention to another inconvenience, which was no doubt experienced by more members of congress than the lack of facilities for writing. "In any small place," he confides to Randolph, "Congress is too dependent on courtesy and favor to be exempt either in their persons or their sensibility from degrading impositions." The influence on such a place as Princeton by the meeting there of congress is clearly brought out in a letter by J. A. Alexander, who says, "instead of the silence of a country hamlet, now nothing is to be heard but the passing and rattle of wagons, coaches and chaises." The streets echo, he adds, with unfamiliar "crying about of pineapples, oranges, lemons and every luxurious article, both foreign and domestic." [2]

Upon the invitation of congress, which wished to consult him, General Washington came from the army headquarters at Newburg and established himself at Rocky Hill, four or five miles from Princeton. In writing from there September 11, 1783, to Governor Clinton, he expresses doubt whether there will be any improvement in the attendance of members while congress remains at Princeton. "The want of accommodation," he says, "added to a disinclination of the southern delegates to be further removed than they formerly were from the centre of

[1] James Madison to Edmund Randolph, Aug. 30, 1783.

[2] Life of J. A. Alexander. Vol. 1, p. 16, by H. C. Alexander. Quoted by Collins.

the empire and an aversion in the others to give up what they conceived to be a point gained by the late retreat to this place keeps matters in an awkward situation to the very great interruption of national affairs. Seven states, it is said, will never agree" [to a plan for a federal seat].

The affair at Philadelphia was not merely one of a day to be lost in the current of other transactions. It helped in permanently shaping the policy of the government towards the army, and such policy of course reflected the sentiment of the day, which strangely enough, as it now appears, was distrust of the men who had endured the privations and the perils of military duties in the service of a government that was both weak and poor.

This attitude of the public at the close of the revolutionary war was confirmed by what appeared to be a tendency in military circles to the assertion of authority. The tone of the Newburg address in the spring of 1783, the Philadelphia affair and the formation of the Society of Cincinnati with the hereditary feature, subsequently done away with, explains in part the unreasonable public opinion hostile to the army and the strong feeling against a standing army, which was potent in keeping the permanent organization down to a mere handful.

While a day in October had been agreed upon for considering the matter of choosing a place for the permanent seat, yet such was the interest taken in the subject of the abiding place for congress, whether temporary or permanent, that efforts began early in the session at Princeton to agree as to when the next session should be held. But in the midst of the discussion of this phase, the question was raised as to the jurisdiction proper for congress to exercise over the place of the permanent residence. A committee was appointed to report upon this subject, of which Mr. Madison was a member. A report was submitted, September 18, 1783, which gave conclusions upon two points. First, the extent of the district necessary; second, the powers to be exercised by congress in that district. As to the first, the committee reported that a district ceded and

accepted ought not to exceed six or be less than three miles square, and second, that congress ought to have exclusive jurisdiction.[1]

This report was referred to the committee of the whole, but there is no record that any further action was taken. In the papers of the continental congress there are two documents evidently intended as amendments, but their place and purpose are not indicated in any way. In one of the papers the principle is laid down that such a district "ought to be entirely exempted from the authority of the state ceding the same and, the organization and administration of the powers of government within the said district concentrated between Congress and the inhabitants thereof." The other paper prescribes that the state or states ceding the territory "should give up all jurisdiction whatsoever . . . that the appointment of judges and the executive power within the said territory shall vest in Congress; . . . that the citizens should enjoy the privilege of trial by jury and of being governed by laws made by representatives of their own election."

Madison, in commenting on the situation, speaks of "the puzzling question as to the precise jurisdiction of Congress over the permanent seat." [2]

The origin of the idea of jurisdiction is purely a matter of conjecture. The first recorded mention is, as stated, in the tender of a location at Kingston by the New York state legislature, March 14, 1783, and the same authority is conferred in the offers made by Maryland of Annapolis, by New Jersey of a location in any portion of the state and by Virginia of Williamsburg. It is also found in the subsequent offer from the state of Pennsylvania of Germantown, and of the several sites proposed in New Jersey.

It is possible, as Alexander Hamilton evidently advised with the promoters of the Kingston location, that the suggestion of conferring such territorial powers upon the general government

[1] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 23, p. 149.

[2] Madison Papers. Vol. 1. Letter to Edmund Randolph, Aug. 30, 1783.

came from him, and it certainly is in harmony with his conception of what the new government should be.

The three tenders, first mentioned, were made prior to the affair at Philadelphia, which resulted in the hasty adjournment of that body to Princeton, and while there is no doubt that the occurrence supplied a convincing argument in support of conferring such powers upon congress, it did not originate the idea. When the actual discussion of the permanent residence question began in congress in October, 1783, it is quite evident from the accounts of the debate which are available, meagre as they are, that the jurisdiction phase of the matter was not the important one. The utility and wisdom of such a provision appears to have been generally conceded. As this first debate on the residence site went on in congress during the October days of 1783, it was soon manifest that the southern members favored the Potomac. A location on that river, they asserted, would be geographically the centre of the United States, at least as far south as Georgetown. They claimed for their section in this matter the consideration of justice and equality.

A further argument advanced was that the trade of Europe must be drawn to that part where congress resides. Hence by moving southward the progress of population must increase in these states.[1]

According to Madison, "the competition for the permanent seat lay between the falls of the Potomac and those of the Delaware." He had hoped from the views of the eastern delegates that they would have given a preference to the Potomac, but he said they joined with Pennsylvania and the intermediate states, in favor of the Delaware.[2]

The hopes of the southern states were not realized, and on the 7th of October congress decided to fix the permanent seat on the Delaware near the falls above Trenton. A committee was named to visit the proposed location and make a report, and this duty was performed. Two weeks later congress decided that in addition to a location on the Delaware, there should also be a

[1] North Carolina State Records. Vol. 16, p. 908.
[2] Madison to Edmund Randolph, Oct. 13, 1783.

national capital at or near the lower falls of the Potomac at Georgetown, and this resolution, presented October 17, 1783, is the first mention on record of the location where the capital was finally placed. It was explained by Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, who offered the resolution, that congress had no prospect of a general assent to any one place and that there is every reason to expect that providing buildings for the alternate residence of congress in two places will be productive of the most salutary effects by securing the mutual confidence and affection of the states and preserving the federal balance of power.[1]

At the same time the geographical balance was adhered to in the further provision that until the buildings at the two places are ready the sessions of congress should be held alternately at Annapolis and at Trenton.

An interesting light is thrown upon the hidden causes of this curious turn in the comments of Elias Boudinot, the president of congress, who wrote to Robert Livingston, October 23, 1783, that the southern members were notified of the choice of the falls of the Delaware. "They have manœuvred in such a manner as to take in the eastern members so completely as to get them (Mr. Gerry at their head) to conform entirely to their views, taking advantage of the absence of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, hastily passed a vote for two places of residence and fixed the other at or near Georgetown on the Potomac and the temporary residence alternately year about at Annapolis and Trenton till their buildings are erected." [2]

The date of October 17, 1783, is not only that of the first recorded mention of the place ultimately selected, unless the general description of a site on the Potomac in the Maryland tender, a few months previously, can be considered as having the Georgetown location in view, but it is also the date of the first enactment by congress requiring the surrender by the states of territorial jurisdiction over the federal site.

[1] Journals of Congress, Oct. 17, 1783. Vol. 8.

[2] Lenox Library, Livingston papers, 1777–1799, p. 945. Quoted by Collins.

The provision made for two capitals, one at Georgetown near the falls of the Potomac and the other just below the falls of the Delaware, proved to be only a temporary advantage for the southern minority and the allies they had secured from the New England states. The law was carried out only so far as the temporary residence was concerned. Congress held the next session in Annapolis, and about two months of the following session in Trenton, New Jersey. The plan of having two capitals was not well received, and the spirit of some of the criticisms of the day has been preserved in the satirical effusions of Francis Hopkinson. In one of these the suggestion was made that there should be only one federal town but two places of residence, and that the former was to be on a platform supported on wheels which could be moved from place to place. He expanded this whimsical idea in the statement that the statue of Washington, which was authorized at the same session, was to be placed on wheels, so that it could go where congress went.

The double capital idea was abandoned by the legislation of December 23, 1784, which was enacted during the session held in Annapolis. While no definite result was reached during the time spent in Annapolis, which followed the meeting at Princeton, still it was declared in a resolution offered, April 26, 1784, at that session, that the act providing for a federal site on the Potomac had been virtually repealed.[1]

From the tone of the same resolution it is evident that the committee appointed to visit the Potomac had been notified to take no steps in the matter until further instructed by congress. But a report was made, as there is a record in the proceedings of the house of July 6, 1790, that a report "of a committee appointed by the old congress to view the banks of the Potomac" was presented. This report has not been preserved, as is the case with that of the committee authorized to inspect the Delaware site.[2]

[1] At this session Mr. Jefferson endeavored without success to secure consent to a resolution providing that the following session be held at Alexandria, Va.

[2] Papers of the Continental Congress.

As stated by Mr. Boudinot, advantage was taken of the absence of members to push the double residence plan through. Only seven states were represented, but all voted for the measure, in furtherance of an agreement the nature of which is not known.

The law of December 23, 1784, passed at the next session in Trenton, providing for a capital city of a nation that had won its independence but which had not shown its ability to frame an effective and strong system of government, can only be regarded as an instance of supreme confidence that the nation was to be enduring, for the convention which drafted the constitution was still three years off and the vital weakness of the confederacy was each day growing more apparent. Still, the delegates of the states, possessing no power to raise revenue or to enforce their will upon the individual states and hardly able to secure a quorum, enacted a measure to erect buildings for the use of congress, and with that in view provided for the appointment of three commissioners to lay out a district of not less than two and not more than three miles square on the banks of the Delaware near the falls for a federal town. Authority was given to purchase as much land as might be necessary to erect "in an elegant manner" a house for the accommodation of congress, and houses for the residences of the president of congress, and for the heads of departments; and to secure the means to do this, the commissioners were empowered to draw on the treasury of the United States for a sum not exceeding $100,000. No attempt was made to carry out this law, except the appointment of commissioners.

Congress did not again resume consideration of this subject until some two years later, when an effort was made which failed, to substitute the falls of the Potomac for the proposed site on the Delaware. By that time the movement towards the coming together of the delegates that were to form the convention which framed the constitution was well under way. On the 21st of February, 1787, a resolution was adopted by congress calling such a convention, and on the 17th of September of the same year, the constitution was transmitted to congress

by the convention, and the former body submitted it to the states for their action.

Upon the ratification of that instrument, the duty devolved upon congress of selecting a place where the new body should meet for the purpose of putting the government into operation. A provision for a district under the exclusive legislation of congress, and ten miles square, which should be the seat of the government, was made a part of the constitution and appears among the enumerated powers of congress. The jurisdiction phase had apparently been accepted from the beginning of the consideration of the subject as essential and desirable, but as has been pointed out, the grounds for such a conclusion can only be inferred.

The precise area of the proposed federal district had not previously been determined, and the reasons for the conclusion reached in that particular, as well as those in general, for forming such a district with exclusive powers over it vested in congress were apparently not largely considered during the deliberation of the constitutional convention. But what has been preserved of the discussions in that body on the federal district shows clearly that the affront received by congress at Philadelphia was looked upon as sufficient to demonstrate that the dignity and safety of the national body could not be left to the discretion of state legislatures.

The first mention of the section relating to the district in the constitution is in the draft submitted by Charles Pinckney of Maryland on the 29th of May, 1787, three months after the convention began its session, and when it had nearly half completed the seven months of its existence. The wording of the clause as it appears in the Pinckney draft is the same as that which forms a part of the constitution. Congress shall have power, it runs, "To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession by particular states and the acceptance by Congress, become the seat of government of the United States and to exercise like authority over all places purchased, by the consent of the legislature in which the same shall be, for

the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock yards and other needful buildings, and to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing power vested by this constitution in the government of the United States or in any department or officer thereof." Three months after this clause had been brought to the attention of the convention it was adopted, and so recorded without debate.

As is well known, the Pinckney draft of the constitution that has been preserved is not the original document, but as it came from the committee with all amendments and alterations. It is therefore impossible to trace the authorship of the clause relating to the district, as slight attention was given to this section by the various state conventions that ratified it or by the body from which that instrument emanated. In only four out of the thirteen state conventions was the subject of the federal district discussed, and these were North Carolina, Virginia, New York and Massachusetts.

The strict adherents of the sovereign powers of the states or rather those most fearful of creating a government capable of exercising despotic power and who were delegates to the conventions of North Carolina and Virginia, rather balked at the idea of a territory where congress was the only and the supreme lawmaker. In such a district, they asserted, the state laws could be set aside, and there violators of state authority could find a sanctuary. There, exclaimed one of the speakers, tyranny can get a foothold, and there special privileges of trade might be enjoyed by resident merchants, tending to centre commerce there and discriminating against those engaged in trade outside of such favored district.

But the emphasis was placed by the advocates of this clause on the vital need of having the federal city in a territory where the general government would be sovereign and the few objections raised to the creation of such a district were apparently looked upon as highly theoretical. It may also be noted that the argument for independent jurisdiction was largely based upon the affair in Philadelphia. In fact, it was asserted by one of the

Virginia convention delegates, that the idea of exclusive legislation had its origin in that insult to congress.

Nor was this grant of power considered of sufficient consequence to claim the attention of any one of the three expositors of the constitution whose papers were brought together under the title of *The Federalist*, with the solitary exception of Madison. In No. XLIII, he devoted a page to this clause which he justifies on the ground of "The indispensable necessity of complete authority at the seat of government," and adds as to the effect upon the political rights of the citizens of the district "as it is to be appropriated to their use, with the consent of the State ceding it, as the State will no doubt provide in the compact for the rights and the consent of the citizens inhabiting it; as the inhabitants will find sufficient inducement of interest to become willing partners to this cession; as they will have had their voice in the election of the government which is to exercise authority over them; as a municipal legislature for local purposes, derived from their own suffrages, will of course be allowed them; . . . every imaginable objection seems to be obviated."

The last four years of the existence of the continental congress were spent in New York City. The members had an opportunity of witnessing the recovery of the city from the effects of the war and its rapid growth, as they had come there in the opening month of 1785, just a little more than a year after the evacuation by the British army, bringing to a close an occupation that had lasted seven years and had left the city partly in ruins. More than half of the 25,000 souls that comprised the population in 1776 had disappeared.

But when the continental congress decided to meet there, the city hall, which had been used by the British as a prison and was in a dilapidated condition, was restored and fitted up for the use of that body. When the news came of the adoption of the constitution, and with the hope that New York was to be the place where the new government was to be set in motion, the city hall building was torn down and on its site now occupied by the subtreasury building in Wall Street, the city fathers resolved to provide a building worthy of the occasion.

The motives for this civic spirit may not have been entirely unmixed, for had not the population grown to 30,000, and had not the city prospered? All this prosperity was not attributed to the presence of congress, but still merely as a business proposition it was recognized that the national body was a valuable asset; at any rate, a building was proposed that was to exceed in beauty and impressiveness anything of the sort to be found in the country.

To Pierre Charles L'Enfant, late a major in the engineer corps of the revolutionary army, was intrusted the designing and construction of the building, and when in the following spring of 1789 the members of the first congress assembled in New York, they found themselves amidst surroundings which for elegance and beauty had never before been experienced by the assembled representatives of the people. There were arches and classic columns, marble pavements and painted ceilings, crimson damask canopies and hangings, while a portico with its arcaded front and a highly decorated pediment were the features of an exterior that was pronounced to be really magnificent. But owing to the speed with which the building was erected and the quarrels between the architect and contractors, bad work resulted, and in a few years the building was torn down.

As this is the first appearance in the story of the rise and development of a nation's capital city of one whose name is inseparably connected with it, and as it was his first employment of consequence after leaving the continental army, it may be well to give the sequel of his relations with the New York City authorities. The characteristics of this gifted but eccentric man were exhibited in that affair in much the same fashion as in all the engagements of like nature in subsequent years.

As a remuneration for his services in connection with the building, the city authorities offered L'Enfant $750 or a grant of city lots and the freedom of the city. Claiming that this was entirely inadequate, he declined the offer.[1]

[1] The Story of a Street. Frederick T. Hill. Harper's, July and September, 1908.

At that time L'Enfant had been in this country twelve years. He shared in the enthusiasm which the struggle for liberty aroused in the ardent minds of so many of his gallant countrymen, especially those in the French army. He was born, August 2, 1754, in Paris, the son of Pierre L'Enfant, "Painter in ordinary to the King in his manufacture of Gobelins," and member of the Academy of Fine Arts.[1]

At the age of twenty-three he was serving as brevet lieutenant of French colonial troops. Then in company with eight of his compatriots he came to America and offered his services to the colonies. He arrived in this country in the summer of 1777, several months before Lafayette reached these shores, and landing at Charleston, went to Philadelphia.[2]

He joined the continental army as a volunteer and at his own expense, and then on April 30, 1779, was made captain, corps of engineers, to rank from the 18th of February.[3]

He was wounded in a gallant forward movement at the assault on Savannah and was made a prisoner, May 12, 1780, at the siege of Charleston and was exchanged in November of that year. He served in the army to the close of the war. On the 25th of May, 1783, he was made brevet major of engineers by congress, evidently through the good offices of General Washington, as indicated in a letter of March 4, 1782, from Washington to Captain L'Enfant, in which the former stated he had been "favored with a letter from you on the 13th of February. I am sensible how disagreeable it is to have an inferior officer promoted over your head and am sorry it is not in my power to remedy it. The promotion of Major Rochefontaine was a matter in which I had not the least interference. It took place solely on the recommendation of General Du-

[1] Address of J. J. Jusserand, April 28, 1909, on occasion of the reinterment of L'Enfant's remains. Also letter of Jusserand to the commissioners of the district (*Evening Star*, March 13, 1912) in which he states the elder L'Enfant was "a painter of fame in his day" and some of his pictures of French battles of the time of Louis XV had recently been placed on exhibition in the palace at Versailles.

[2] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 78, Vol. 7, p. 115.

[3] Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army. Heitman.

portail, who, I believe, represented to Congress that it was the practice of all nations after a successful siege to promote the engineer who had contributed to the success."

"Your zeal and action are such as to reflect the highest honor on yourself and are extremely pleasing to me and I have no doubt they will have their due weight with Congress in any future promotion in your Corps."[1]

A month after he had been thus honored by the American congress, the French government, in consideration of the usefulness of his services during the war in America, granted him a pension of 300 livres.

At the close of the war L'Enfant made a visit to his home in France. While there, he organized a branch of the Society of the Cincinnati and had executed the design for the emblem of the order which he had drawn. He returned to America in the course of a few months, as he had decided to join his fortunes with that of the new country, "having been persuaded," he stated in a letter to the president of congress, dated Philadelphia, December 15, 1784, in which he urged the necessity of the establishment of a corps of engineers, "under the expectation of rendering my services once more acceptable to the United States." He adds, "Having been led to expect that such an establishment would take place, I should now be doubly disappointed if it should not, as by remaining here I have lost the opportunity of getting employment in my own country, from which I have been the more encouraged to absent myself as Brigadier-General Rosseinaska at leaving this continent gave me the flattering expectation of being at the head of a department in which, if successful, I shall endeavor to render service agreeable to the United States and make it a duty to seize every opportunity of giving testimony of the faithfulness with which I shall exert myself to contribute to her happiness and prosperity."[2]

The memorial accompanying this letter consists of ten closely written folio pages, and is a characteristic L'Enfant production,

[1] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 78, Vol. 14, p. 535.
[2] The same. No. 78, Vol. 14, p. 579.

prolix as well as confused in expression, due no doubt in part to the author's using a foreign language. He presents a plan for the organization of an engineer corps and points out the defenceless condition of the coasts, the need of a navy to protect the commerce and of a permanent military establishment.

At the outset L'Enfant refers to "The hardships I have undergone while in the field and in captivity." Appended are observations upon the qualifications and duties of an engineer and the details for the formation of a battalion of sappers and miners. This voluminous communication reveals the man as he is shown in his later relations with practical affairs, his head in the clouds, unconscious as to whether or not his feet rested on the solid ground. There is the same disparity between means and ends in this project of army organization, as in his later management of city affairs, a total ignoring of the hostile public sentiment of the day towards the army as well as of the uncertain and meagre resources of the government.

A glimpse of his associates at this time may be had from a letter written by L'Enfant, dated New York, November 7, 1785, to Charles Thomson, secretary of congress. It was in behalf of the artist Houdon, and in reply to some inquiry made as to the cost of the intended equestrian statue of General Washington.[1]

The next record in his career is his employment as architect of the city hall building in New York City. In addition to provision for the accommodation of congress, the city authorities also began the erection down by the Battery of a residence for the president of the United States. But after a stay of a year and a half in New York, the seat of government was removed to Philadelphia, and the house intended for the president was never occupied by that official. The outcome of the renewed discussion in the old congress, as the continental body came to be known after the adoption of the constitution, of the residence question, which took the wide range of the choice of a permanent as well as a temporary location, was the naming of New York City as the meeting-place of the new congress.

[1] Papers of the Continental Congress. No. 78, Vol. 14, p. 677.

The other phase of the question was left as a heritage to the new body.

From the tenor of the resolutions offered during this closing period of the discussion, it is evident that while the delegates were not united on any one place, yet the sentiment in favor of centrality was strong enough practically to restrict the area of selection considered to the section bounded on the north and the south by the Delaware and the Potomac rivers.

There was another consideration which had weight; namely, that changes in the meeting-place of congress, pending the solution of a permanent seat, should be avoided, for as it was expressed later on, after congress had been for some time fixed in New York, changes are "an indication of instability in the national councils, and therefore highly injurious to the interests as well as derogatory to the dignity of the United States." [1]

With many new and perplexing problems confronting it in connection with the task of setting in operation the balanced machinery of the new form of government, the first congress under the constitution, which began its deliberations in New York City in April, 1789, gave long and careful consideration to the residence subject. But first a tariff bill was framed to provide revenues for the support of the government and also to give protection to the infant industries of the country. Executive departments were created, and amendments to the newly made constitution were agreed upon. Plans for the funding of the public debt and the assumption of state debts, for the disposal of the public lands and for a judicial system were yet to be finally acted upon, and in some cases even to be considered.

In the midst of this important work and at the opening of the last month of the session, the residence matter was brought up. At once protests were heard, and it was urged that questions of more consequence were pressing for attention. Besides, it was pointed out, the revenues of the government were as yet unknown, and it was unwise to undertake at that time

[1] Journals of Congress. Aug. 5, 1788.

an expense that was not absolutely necessary. Were not members comfortable in their present quarters? it was asked. Were there any intimations that they were not welcome and desired by the citizens of New York?

One of the members who saw no reason for taking up the subject at that time observed in a sarcastic vein that many parts of the country appear extremely anxious to have congress with them. "Trenton, Germantown, Carlisle, Lancaster, York and Reading," he said, "have sent us an abundance of petitions setting forth various advantages. We wish the inhabitants may enjoy the benefits of them, and if they are pleasantly situated and have plenty of fish, we are glad to hear it, and if it should ever suit Congress to remove to any of them, why Congress will enjoy the benefit of them also." [1]

But the southern members, led by Richard Bland Lee and James Madison, delegates from Virginia, were insistent for present consideration. They argued there was no question more important, one in which all the people of the country were as deeply interested and upon the proper settlement of which rested the tranquillity and peace of the country and the very existence of the government.

There is another reason given for the eagerness of the southern members to settle the residence site at that time, and that was their conviction that the decision was sure to be as they desired. For an agreement had been made with some of the delegates from Pennsylvania by which in consideration of their voting for the Potomac, the temporary seat of government would be at Philadelphia for fifteen years. But as it proved, this scheme was overturned; a new combination was made. The eastern men, by promising to let New York have the temporary capital, secured the support of the delegates from that state and won over the Pennsylvania men from their southern allies by agreeing to vote for the Susquehanna as the permanent seat! [2]

The advocates of immediate consideration, ignorant of this change, had their way, and the subject was taken up. But

[1] Annals of Congress. 1st Cong., 1st Sess., Aug. 26, 1789, p. 789.
[2] Works of Fisher Ames. Vol. 1. Boston, 1856.

before the debate had been long under way the discovery was made that their coalition had fallen to pieces. They sought delay as eagerly as they had hitherto urged action. But it was in vain, and the debate went on. Under these circumstances even the calm and philosophic Madison was led to exclaim in his place in the house "if a prophet had arisen in the Virginia convention that ratified the constitution and brought the proceedings of this day into view, that I as firmly believe Virginia might not have been a part of the Union at this moment." [1]

There is no record of the course of sentiment in the senate, but it is quite clear from the debate in the house that the Susquehanna and the Potomac were the chief rivals. The exact localities in view were Georgetown, near the lower falls of the Potomac, and Wrights Ferry, Pa., near the falls of the Susquehanna and thirty-five miles from tide-water. It was conceded that the former was considerably south of the centre of population, but then that was a defect, it was urged, which would be cured as the population increased.

Great stress was laid upon the importance of a location on a navigable river far enough from the sea to be safe from hostile attacks. But it was upon the means of communication with the western country supplied by the rivers named that the respective advocates of the rival localities chiefly relied for arguments to win support. This phase of the question was one peculiar to a time when in a country of vast distances the rivers furnished the principal means of carrying on trade.

Some four years before, the Potomac Company, with General Washington as its president, had been chartered by the joint action of the states of Maryland and Virginia to overcome the natural obstacles in the form of falls and rapids in the Potomac by constructing canals. A company had been formed in the year 1784 to perform a similar service in the case of the Susquehanna River, but it never attained the importance of the Potomac enterprise.

The movement for the improvement of the Potomac in its

[1] Annals of Congress. 1st Cong., 1st Sess., p. 857.

effects had a much wider significance, for it was due to the coming together of the delegates of the states of Virginia and Maryland and the subsequent decision to bring into the conference delegates from the state of Pennsylvania to unite in the Potomac improvement that led to the conception of a convention of the states to take up the entire subject of trade between the states with the view of getting rid of the harrassing and injurious commercial regulations framed only in the interests of individual states.

Then birth was given to the pregnant thought that if the states met to consider trade relations, why should not the vital and recognized defects of the articles of confederation be also taken up. From this germ came the recommendation of the Annapolis trade convention that congress call together delegates from all the states to consider the subject of providing a government adequate to the needs of the country. Such a call was issued by congress in the spring of 1787, and a few weeks later the convention that framed the constitution began its great work in Philadelphia.

On the general topic of centrality, Madison in the course of the debate on the residence bill in the house drew an argument from the experience of the states. He said that in every instance where the seat of government has been placed in an uncentral portion, the spectacle has been witnessed of the people struggling to place it where it ought to be. In many instances, he added, they have gained their point, and in proof cited the cases of the capitals of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Similar movements have been begun, he said, in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York and Massachusetts.

No more marked change in conditions has occurred than that which has deprived completely of all force an argument advanced by Madison based on the advantages derived from merely being near to the seat of government. To those thus situated, he said, will come an earlier knowledge of the laws, a greater influence in enacting them and better opportunities for anticipating them. "If it were possible," he added, "to promulgate laws, by some instantaneous operation, it would

be of less consequence in that point of view where the government might be placed."

The pecuniary advantages to the locality chosen were also touched upon, and on this phase Madison presumed that the expenditures by those immediately connected in the administration of the government and by others who may come there will not be less than half a million a year.

The division in sentiment among the Maryland delegates, as shown by the votes, was due mainly to the influence of Baltimore, where it was realized that the improvement of the Susquehanna River, so as to make it available for commerce, would bring to its port on the Chesapeake Bay, thirty-seven miles from the mouth of the river, much of the trade. It was largely owing to the apprehension of the diversion of trade away from Philadelphia and down the Susquehanna, that the representatives of the state of Pennsylvania were not a unit, some favoring the Delaware location and others the one on the Susquehanna.

Robert Morris, who had large influence, favored the Delaware, and especially a site near the falls of that river opposite Trenton, where he had extensive property interests. He was willing, however, to accept a place near Philadelphia, and his attitude, no doubt, largely accounts for the course taken by the senate in substituting the suburbs of that city for the location on the Susquehanna.

One of the arguments advanced in favor of selecting a place on the Susquehanna on the Pennsylvania side was that in the event of a withdrawal from the union of the western country, which was a matter of current talk, as the southern states would also go with it, that the new capital city would be within the territory of the northern section well away from its frontiers.

It was apparent almost from the start that the opposition against such a southern location as that proposed on the Potomac was not only united but numerically stronger than the other side. Hence the trading recorded by Fisher Ames. Much was said in the course of this first discussion in regard to the possibilities of the navigation of the Potomac and the

Susquehanna rivers and the proximity of their head waters to the streams that emptied into the Monongahela and the Allegheny rivers, forming a connection with the then means of communication with the western country by the Ohio River.

The forwardness of the work accomplished up to that time by the Potomac Company was brought out by one of the speakers, who said a vessel carrying twenty-four hogsheads of tobacco had descended that river within thirteen miles of Georgetown. Owing to the lack of knowledge of the immense territory through which these rivers passed and also the lack of a census, the statements made in regard to those regions, as well as those relating to population, are defective.

It was quite evident that the feeling displayed by the southern states on the residence question from the very outset was so determined and intense that it had a decisive influence in limiting the area of choice to a locality at or about what was then regarded as the centre of the territory along the Atlantic seaboard. The New England and the Middle states, with the exception of Pennsylvania, were therefore eliminated on geographical grounds and the field of choice was recognized as being within the bounds of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. Another limitation was the general acquiescence in the importance of selecting a site on a navigable river. As has been pointed out, both Pennsylvania and Maryland were divided in sentiment, as in each instance there were two localities within the bounds of the respective states which had advocates.

While Virginia had in the beginning made an offer of Williamsburg with also a tentative suggestion of some site on the Potomac, Alexandria having been proposed several years before by Jefferson, yet it was apparently realized very early that the first-named place was too far south, and then the state stood unitedly and unwaveringly for the Potomac location. In the preamble of the act of cession of a district on the Potomac, enacted by the legislature of that state, December 3, 1789, the main arguments as subsequently advanced by the ad-

vocates of a southern residence site were stated. These were a central situation "having regard as well for population, extent of territory and a free navigation to the Atlantic as to the most direct and ready communication with our fellow-citizens in the western frontier." These principles, which in the opinion of the delegates from Virginia ought to govern in making a choice in the location, were again set forth in a resolution introduced in congress by Richard Bland Lee when the subject first came up.

It was further declared in this resolution that the banks of the Potomac above tide-water would be a desirable site for the capital. "Where," it was added, "the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia may participate in such a locality." In this provision is the germ of one clause of the law enacted at the next session which named a section of the country some sixty-six miles in length as the crow flies, where a location might be selected. By making the proposed district tributary, as it were, to three states, but still on the Potomac, the circle of interest in the general locality would be extended and friends would be gained.[1]

Both houses of congress entered upon the consideration of the residence question about the same time. The house reached a decision first, after four full days of debate, and on the 22d day of September, 1789, sent to the senate a bill naming a site near the falls of the Susquehanna in the state of Pennsylvania as the permanent place and New York City as the temporary location.

This measure was amended in the senate by substituting the town of Germantown and part of the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia for the site on the Susquehanna and naming New York City as the temporary location. In addition to striking from the house bill the Susquehanna site, the senate rejected an amendment naming a location on the northern

[1] It is apparent that proximity to the borders of Pennsylvania was contemplated rather than locating any part of the new district within the state lines, as the furthest northern limit of the region of choice was some nineteen miles south of the Pennsylvania state line.

bank of the Potomac. The vote in the senate on Germantown was a tie, the vice-president, John Adams, by his vote, determining the question in the affirmative.

The bill thus radically changed was returned to the house less than three days before the date fixed upon for the adjournment of the session. It was found another change of importance had been made in the house bill by the provision that the state of Pennsylvania should furnish $100,000 to be used in the erection of the public buildings. It is asserted by William Maclay, that this provision was based upon such a proposition made in the senate by his colleague, Robert Morris, on his own responsibility, without having first secured the sanction of the state. Mr. Morris was then considered the wealthiest man in the country, and his personal guarantee that the money would be provided was no doubt looked upon as ample security.[1]

The state of Pennsylvania had formerly offered to the new congress for use as a residence site any district in the state, and similar offers had been made by Delaware, Virginia and later on by Maryland. In the course of the debate in the house on the bill, as it came back from the senate, it was pointed out that the senate had proceeded on an entirely different principle as to the location, ignoring both the Potomac and the Susquehanna sites, yet satisfaction was expressed over the proposed financial arrangement as being better suited to the state of the treasury.

However, a stronger feeling would no doubt have been displayed had it not been that it was realized that legislation was practically impossible owing to the brief time remaining of the session. It was Madison, the constant and able advocate of the Potomac site, who proposed an amendment providing for the continuance of the laws of Pennsylvania over the district until congress should otherwise direct, an improvement in the measure to which there could be no objection, except that making any change in the bill involved its

[1] Sketches of Debates in the First Senate of the United States. William Maclay, Harrisburg, 1880.

return to the senate, which at that stage in the session would be fatal to its enactment into law. However, the amendment was adopted by the house, the bill was sent to the senate, where it was taken up in the hurry of the closing hours only to be postponed until the next meeting of congress.

## CHAPTER II

### RESIDENCE BILL BECOMES A LAW

NEARLY six months of the second session of the first congress, which convened in January, 1790, passed before the residence subject was again taken up. Then it was proposed in the house to divide the question and only decide at that time upon the temporary location. So, on the last day of May, a resolution was adopted by the house to hold the next session in Philadelphia, but a week later the senate by a majority of two votes refused to concur. At once the senate began the consideration of a report from a committee which favored the Potomac as the site of the permanent residence, but after striking out the site named, further consideration was not resumed until another resolve of the house, dated June 11, was received, which provided for holding the next session in Baltimore.

At the time the house took this course one of the delegates from Maryland stated that the inhabitants of Baltimore had raised a subscription of between twenty and thirty thousand pounds, Maryland currency (equal to $53,000 or $69,000), for the purpose of providing for the accommodation for congress, in the event that place was selected. The facilities of Baltimore as a meeting-place had been tested somewhat in the winter of 1776, when on account of the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, the continental congress adjourned to Baltimore, where a session lasting two months was held. At the next meeting congress was back again in Philadelphia.

During the thirteen years that had elapsed since the chief town of Maryland had been the temporary capital, great changes had taken place. The population had nearly doubled, so that in 1790 the census returns showed a total of thirteen

thousand souls. Since the close of the war, its trade had greatly increased, especially from the western country, to the loss of the Potomac towns and it had become one of the shipping ports of the country. The wealth and enterprise of its citizens is represented somewhat in the liberality of the offer made to congress.[1]

The senate, however, laid aside the house amendment naming Baltimore, and proceeded to consider a bill naming a Potomac site between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and Conococheague, as reported favorably by a committee. This bill, with its provisions practically unchanged, was adopted, July 1, 1790, the vote being twelve to fourteen. The only change in the bill was the omission of a clause authorizing the president of the United States to borrow a sum not exceeding $100,000 to be repaid from the duties on imports and tonnage, thus leaving as the only suggestion of means of financing the undertaking and of exercising the authority conferred on the commissioners "to purchase or accept" land in such quantities as the president may deem necessary, and in order that suitable buildings might be provided, the president was authorized "to accept grants of money."

Such grants of money were practically assured before the bill was finally completed by the senate. For, on the 10th of December, 1789, some seven months previous to this date, Virginia had made a grant of $120,000, or, as it was phrased in the act, "an advance," conditional upon the selection by congress of a Potomac site. The coöperation of Maryland was asked, and also "an advance" by that state of a sum equal to at least two thirds of the amount named by Virginia. It was not until the session of the Maryland legislature in Novem-

[1] At the time action was postponed by the senate on the house resolve to adjourn to Baltimore, in order to take up the residence bill as reported from its committee, memorials both from citizens of Baltimore and from Robert Peter in behalf of himself and other inhabitants of Georgetown were read, inviting congress to locate in their towns. The date was June 28, 1790. At the first session a petition was presented from the inhabitants of Georgetown, "offering to put themselves and their fortunes under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress in case that town should be selected as the permanent seat of government." The petition was presented in the house, September 8, 1789.

ber, 1790, the concurrence of the state was given, and the sum of $72,000 was authorized to be "advanced towards the expense of erecting the public buildings." The next month the Virginia legislature appropriated $120,000 for the same purpose.[1]

The bill as adopted by the senate reached the house early in July, was discussed for three days and on the 9th of July was passed by a vote of twenty-two to twenty-nine. In both houses numerous amendments were offered, and in both were found those who preferred Baltimore or Wilmington, Del., and in the house, Philadelphia, while an effort was made to continue congress temporarily at New York. In the senate a proposition was made to fix the residence "within thirty miles of Hancock Town," which was not agreed to.[2]

According to the provisions of the residence bill which became a law, July 16, 1790, the next session, to begin the following December, was to be held in Philadelphia, where it was stipulated "prior to the first Monday in December next all offices at-

[1] Some sixty years ago an effort was made, and renewed at various times down to a quite recent period, to have the United States repay to Virginia and Maryland these sums of money on the ground that, as the laws of both states show, they were described as "advances." But these applications have been without avail. It is quite evident that the act of July 16, 1790, gave no authority for the acceptance of loans of money but only "to accept grants of money." House Report, No. 512, 50th Cong., 1st. Sess.

[2] This was one of several amendments which were disposed of without debate, but the location proposed gives a significance and importance it would not otherwise possess, as it undoubtedly furnishes another indication of the tendency away from a southern location, as well as a purpose to gratify the three states of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland. It is also interesting as being the most advanced western point that was voted upon during the entire discussion. For Hancock Town or Hancock of to-day lies in the narrow strip of Maryland between the Pennsylvania and the Virginia state lines. It is about thirty-five miles to the west and north of the extreme northern limit of the region of choice named in the residence bill, and forty miles east of Cumberland, the latter being a hundred and forty-six miles from the city of Washington. "Within thirty miles of Hancock," the new federal district could have been wholly located within the state lines of Pennsylvania at about the same latitude as that of Chambersburg and Bedford. Or, it could have been placed within the territory of the three states or in either Maryland or Virginia.

tached to the seat of government shall be removed to and until the said first Monday in December in the year 1800 shall remain at the city of Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania, at which place the sessions of Congress next ensuing the present shall be held. . . . That on the said first Monday in December, 1800, the seat of government of the United States shall, by virtue of this act, be transferred to the district and place aforesaid."

A district not exceeding ten miles square was to be located on the river Potomac "at some place between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and the Connogocheague . . . and the same is hereby accepted for the permanent seat of the government of the United States." The president was authorized to appoint three commissioners "who shall under the direction of the President survey and define said district" and have power "to purchase or accept such quantity of land on the eastern side of the said river [Maryland] as the President shall deem proper." In this district prior to the first Monday in December, 1800, the commissioners were "to provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress and of the President and for the public offices of the United States."

"For defraying the expense of such purchases and buildings," the law provided "the President of the United States be authorized to accept grants of money."

The necessity of providing some government for the district pending action by congress was met by directing that "the operation of the laws of the state within such district shall not be affected by this acceptance until the time fixed for the removal of the government thereto and until Congress shall otherwise by law provide." This provision was also in accordance with the Virginia cession law of December 3, 1789, and of the Maryland law of December 19, 1791, ratifying the cession.

The bill contained the first reference made in the consideration of the residence question to "That Indian place," as the stream named as the northern limit of the region of choice was sarcastically termed in the course of the debate. It was also

the occasion of the sneer about "building a palace in the woods." In point of fact, the Conococheague is a tributary of the Potomac, entering that river near the town of Williamsport, Md., some twenty miles south of the Pennsylvania state line, and some seventy-eight miles north of Washington, and nearly the same distance east of Cumberland. But the sarcasm lost much of its force with men of that day who witnessed the progress made in subduing the wilderness and foresaw the wonderful possibilities in the way of growth of population and the development of the material resources of the country.[1]

It can readily be understood, however, that such an expansion of the region of selection to the north of Georgetown was designed to meet the criticism based upon the southern latitude of the place. As Richard Bland Lee of Virginia stated to the house in the final discussion, "We are not confined to a particular spot on the Potomac, we may fix on a place as far north as the gentleman from Connecticut wishes."

Lee also asserted that the states of Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia which, he said, contributed more than one half to the public revenue, and which have the only rival claim to the seat of government are satisfied with the bill.

With this exception, and of course the final determination of the temporary and permanent sites, the residence bill as it was placed on the statute book contained no features that had not been a part of various propositions made since the subject was first considered. The omission of any direct appropriation was unusual, but then it will be recalled that the Virginia legislature had voted a grant of money, in the event a Potomac site was chosen, to defray the expense of the public buildings — a larger amount than had been hitherto mentioned, while it was doubtless understood that Maryland would provide, as it did, a sum equal to about two thirds of the $120,000 offered by Virginia, as stipulated in the Virginia act.

[1] Thirty years before, the locality of Hagerstown formed the then western frontier. To the west were the almost unbroken forests with scarcely a settlement to Fort Cumberland, which stood on what became the site of the town of Cumberland. The latter was the outlying outpost to ward off from the settlers the Indian forays.

It is significant that the measure became a law in the precise form it was reported from the committee of the senate to that body. The debates in the house, which are the only ones that were reported, show that prior to the final enactment there was considerable discussion, which however covered practically the same ground as that of the first session. It is also worthy to be noted that the power of exclusive legislation in the district conferred by the constitution on congress did not enter at all in the discussion, nor was any attempt made to take away or to modify, as was done with other clauses of that instrument by constitutional amendment the authority thus conveyed.

It is quite clear from the accounts of contemporaries, as well as by at least one reference in the final debate in the house, and the same conclusion might be drawn from the legislative history of the bill, more especially in the second session of the first congress, that the residence bill was the result of what was then described as "a bargain," but which as a familiar feature of legislative procedure, is more commonly spoken of as a compromise.

The southern states from the outset had stood unitedly for a southern location. The Pennsylvanians had a similar ambition for their own state, which was in population and in wealth a leader in the new republic. The large delegation from New York state desired the nation's capital to remain in the chief city of their state as long as possible; as they were well aware it was hopeless to expect to have it permanently that far north of the centre of population of the thirteen states. In fact, at no time was serious consideration given to the selection of a location for the permanent seat farther north than Philadelphia.

The eastern members naturally were disposed to keep the residence site as far north as possible. But the burning question at that time was the funding of the public debt and the assumption of the state debts. Alexander Hamilton, as the secretary of the treasury, at the first session of the new congress made a report recommending the funding of both forms of indebtedness in obligations of the United States. On this there

was a division of opinion and the general line of cleavage was to be found in the latitude which separated Maryland from Pennsylvania and what was then looked upon as the boundary between the northern and the southern states. It was recognized that the creditor class was largely to be found in the north where trade was a leading occupation, and not agriculture, as in the south.

The debate on the funding bill had continued through the second session of congress, and the anti-assumptionists were rejoicing in their triumph in the house where the measure had been defeated. This was the situation when, about the middle of June, 1790, Alexander Hamilton devised a plan for securing legislation on both the funding and the residence bills. In a word, he proposed in consideration of locating the capital on the Potomac to get enough votes to assure the enactment of the funding measure.

Maclay records in his journal, June 14, 1790, that Morris told him of meeting Hamilton by appointment early one morning in the Battery; and walking about in that rural retreat, Hamilton said that one vote was wanted in the senate and five in the house to carry the funding bill. Hamilton then proposed, as Maclay asserts, an agreement about the residence bill.

Jefferson in his "Anas" also tells of an interview at this time with Hamilton. The scene was the sidewalk in front of the president's residence, and as a result a dinner was given by Jefferson, on which occasion an agreement was reached to give votes for the funding bill, in consideration of the residence being placed at Philadelphia for ten years, and then permanently on the Potomac.

Fisher Ames, a member of the house from Massachusetts, also records in his letters the political situation of the two measures. At the first session of congress, he states, the New England men with New York had defeated what he calls an intrigue of the Pennsylvania men with the south for Philadelphia as the temporary seat and the Potomac as the permanent seat, by voting for New York as the temporary location and the Susquehanna as the permanent place. The Pennsylvanians,

he said, abandoned their southern allies and joined with the adherents of the Susquehanna location, and hence the change of front in the first session, on the part of the southerners, and their pleas for delay on a measure that before they had been urgent for immediate action.

On June 11, 1790, Ames writes, "we are sold by the Pennsylvanians and the assumption bill with it," and on July 1, he adds, "Last week the removal bill passed in favor of Philadelphia and the Potomac. That embarrassment out of the way, it is not to be doubted we can carry out the long-contested point—the assumption."

Three days after the residence bill became a law, the house agreed to the funding bill, and on the 9th of August, 1790, that measure was placed on the statute books. Jefferson records that as the result of the argument reached at his dinner two of the Virginia members, Alexander White and Richard Bland Lee, changed their votes in favor of the funding bill, "but White with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive."

Fisher Ames in disgust writes "this despicable grog-shop contest, whether the taverns of New York or Philadelphia should get the custom of congress," and the same thought as to the weight of what he termed business consideration was expressed in the assertion made during the final debate, that congress would never leave Philadelphia, as the influences to keep it there would be too potent to be overcome.

It may be added in passing that such a view was entertained largely by the Philadelphians, and during the years of preparing the new residence place the city of Brotherly Love was looked upon as the active centre of opposition to the execution of a portion at least of the residence bill. As will be shown, Washington realized the attitude of Philadelphia. It was also asserted that it was unjust, nay even dishonest, to remove from New York before that city had an opportunity to secure reimbursement for the expenses it had incurred in preparing suitable accommodations for congress. Reference of course was here in part to the fine new building in Wall Street which the city had built in the fall of 1789 for the use of the new congress.

# CHAPTER III

## DESCRIPTION OF THE POTOMAC REGION

The section of country named in the act of 1790 where the federal capital was to be located derived its chief importance from the Potomac River. Along its banks and those of its tributaries were found only a few small centres of population, the product of the economic influences of large individual holdings and of a purely agricultural community. Conditions were shaped by the needs of plantation life in a region where the chief staple, tobacco, could be brought to navigable waters and shipped to the markets that were mainly in Europe. While the first permanent settlement of Virginia at Jamestown on the James River was made in 1607, and that in Maryland at St. Mary's on the Chesapeake Bay in 1637, yet it was not until near the close of the century and through the opening years of the eighteenth, that the growth of the population led to the settlement of lands not merely along the upper portions of such a river as the Potomac, but throughout what might be termed the back country.

With the Potomac on one side and the broad Chesapeake Bay separating Maryland into two parts, and both having numerous tributaries, and Virginia sharing with Maryland in the use of the Potomac, and with the Rappahannock, the York and James rivers penetrating long distances into the interior and giving access in the readiest manner known to that time with the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic, it is not surprising that the tide-water country held for such a length of time the supremacy in point of population and settlement, as compared with the interior.

The process as well as the progress of occupation may be traced roughly in the course of the creation of the counties on

both sides of the river. Up to the year 1742 Prince William County, Va., comprised all the country along the Potomac from its southern boundary down by Dumfries on Quantico Creek to the north, which ended only at the indefinite region where the frontier line of the Ohio Valley began. In the year 1742 the northern portion was set off as Fairfax County, with Alexandria as the county seat, and thirteen years later Loudoun County was detached.

On the Maryland side of the river Charles County, which was created in 1658, included the entire stretch of country bordering on the Potomac from the Wicomico, near Blackistone Island, to the Blue Ridge and to the "terra incognita" of the frontier. Thirty-seven years later the upper limit of Charles County was fixed at Mattawaman Creek, near Glymont, and the balance of the upper territory constituted Prince George County. Not until 1748 was it found necessary to reduce in size this great territory comprising the whole of western Maryland.

Frederick County was founded, the line separating it from Prince George County being drawn from the mouth of Rock Creek northeast to the Patuxent River near the present town of Laurel, Maryland. But the closeness of the locality that became sixteen years later the District of Columbia to the existing western frontier is shown by the circumstance that in what was known as Lord Dunmore's war in 1774, the inhabitants of Alexandria were so much alarmed by rumors of the approach of their savage foes that they had their property carted away to what was regarded as a more secure place.[1]

The process of settlement was not merely from the tide-water region to the north and west, but there was also a movement of the population to the southward from Pennsylvania.

Along this route came German and Quaker settlers who were the pioneers in the upper portions of Frederick County and also Montgomery County, and a portion of this stream flowed into Loudoun County, Va. They were a sturdy folk, industrious and careful, and were good farmers, and unlike the tide-water

[1] Maryland Archives, Journal Council of Safety. Jan. 30, 1776.

settlers did not devote their entire energies to raising tobacco. They formed the advance guard of the general tide of settlers that made the Shenandoah Valley a place of abundant crops and of the movement which carried the settlements still farther south ready for the advance across the Alleghanies, and where just prior to the revolutionary war those hardy pioneers were mustered who headed the first parties that began the settlement of the fertile lands of Kentucky and Tennessee.

As the seventeenth century closed, and during the early years of the eighteenth century much of the emigration from England, Scotland and Ireland passed up the Chesapeake Bay and along the Potomac, establishing in the case of the Scotch such a settlement as Dumfries, and leaving a trace of their influence in the name New Scotland Hundred, one of the political divisions of Charles County created in 1696 and including within its limits the present territory of the District of Columbia.

The religious and political disturbances in Great Britain served to send forth to the new country representatives of the best families and men of standing and ability in their home communities. In addition to these causes, the growing trade with the colonies of Maryland and Virginia led to the opening of trading centres in charge of representatives of great English commercial houses, and thus helped along the growth of such towns as Bladensburg, Alexandria and Georgetown.[1]

By this time, too, the settlers were free from the dangers which were inevitable while the Indians continued to occupy the same region with the whites. For, as Thomas Jefferson records in his notes on the state of Virginia, written in the years

[1] In addition, the tide of settlement towards the great western country, which became one of the most potent influences in shaping the destiny of the United States, used the thoroughfare across the Alleghany range where subsequently the first and only federal turnpike was built, the old National Pike extending west from Cumberland to Wheeling, one hundred and twenty-six miles, and in the vicinity of which, later on, the rails of that early railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio, were laid. North of Cumberland some thirty miles, and in Pennsylvania, was the other great highway across the mountains forming an early connection between Philadelphia and the settlements about Fort Pitt, or Pittsburg, as it came to be called.

1781 and 1782, in a period of sixty-two years after the Jamestown settlement, two thirds of the Indians constituting the forty tribes that then occupied the country between the sea and the falls of the Potomac had disappeared. This great decrease he attributed to the use of spirituous liquors, to smallpox and to the abridgment of their territory.

The Powhatans, as Captain John Smith records, formed the most powerful tribe, and allied with them were several smaller bands. This indefatigable traveller explored the Potomac River, but according to the best judgment based on his rather vague accounts, it is concluded that he did not get farther up the river than Indian Head, which is some ten miles distant from the city of Washington. In 1631, however, Henry Fleete, an Englishman who had some years previously been held as a captive by the Anacostan Indians living in and around the vicinity of the District, returned to this country on a trading expedition organized in the interests of some English merchants. His account of the ascent of the Potomac, and his description of the vicinity of the Indian village, or town, as he calls it, of Tohogae, leaves no question in the minds of modern scholars that this place occupied the site where Georgetown was built. Fleete is therefore accorded the honor of being the first European to visit the locality of the District.[1]

There is a question whether Smith has a right to the distinction generally accorded him of being the first European to visit the lower Potomac.[2]

The Indian occupation of the District and its vicinity is commemorated in the name Anacostia, which the tributary of the Potomac also known as the Eastern Branch, bears, and

[1] Old Georgetown. By Hugh T. Taggart. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. XI.

[2] The author of the History of the Catholic Church in the United States, John G. Shea, states the Spanish archives contain the record of a visit of a Spanish vessel to the Potomac about the middle of the sixteenth century, half a century before the coming to these shores of Smith. He also states that about the year 1570 a mission station was established by the Jesuits on the Occoquan, but in neither case was a permanent settlement made. A settlement was attempted by the Spanish in 1526 on the site where Jamestown was subsequently located, which was soon abandoned.

which was originally directed to be the southern boundary of the city. This name was also given to an island lying near the Virginia shore and opposite to Georgetown. In the land records of Virginia this island is referred to under the name of My Lord's Island, and later in the Maryland land records of 1682 as Barbadoes, and also by the name of Analostian Island, and also Anacostian Island. When it came into the possession of George Mason in 1777, it began to be known as Mason's Island.

There are other traces of the Indian inhabitants in the sites of their villages marked by stone implements and fragments of pottery. According to the careful and scientific survey made of this region for Indian remains, a line of Indian village sites has been traced along the southern bank of the Eastern Branch from the Potomac as far east as Bladensburg. One such site is indicated in what became the large reservation south of the capitol at the intersection of New Jersey and Virginia avenues, while there are others along the gorge of Piney Branch west of 14th Street, a tributary of Rock Creek, and quite a number on the southern shore of the Potomac, and also in the vicinity of the Little Falls.[1]

Another name besides those derived from the aboriginal inhabitants is found in the map of Augustine Herrman, published in 1673, where the title Turkey Buzzard is applied to the point near the mouth of the Eastern Branch, just east of what was later known as Greenleaf and Arsenal Point. The "Anacostian Islands" also appear on this map, one of which is identified as the one known in modern times as Analostan Island, and the other as the one formerly near the Virginia end of the old Long Bridge, and known as Holmes Island, and also as Alexander's Island.[2]

From all accounts that have come down in regard to this locality, and some of the circumstances are borne out by later

[1] A collection of stone implements from the District of Columbia by S. V. Proudfit. Map of Indian Village Sites, Proceedings U. S. Nat. Museum, Vol. 13, p. 187.

[2] Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 130.

testimony, the region was specially favored, owing to the abundance of game of all kinds, especially the fish with which the waters teemed, and the birds which fed along the banks of the streams. The soil was rich and fertile, in striking contrast to its condition after a few years of the wasteful, one-crop system of the early settlers to which they adhered with a persistence which at the outset at least was due to ignorance rather than obstinacy.

The astonishing fertility of this virgin soil, which continued to yield its yearly crops for a long period without receiving from the tiller anything in return, does not alone account for the continuance of such a method of cultivation. The vast area of the land made it possible for the planter after exhausting one field to abandon it and clear another for the tobacco crop, and hence the abundance of so-called "old fields." The extent of the individual holdings was large.

As the tide of settlement pushed its way up along the tributaries of the river and the land along the Patuxent was taken, then the settlers advancing still farther to the north found their way along the upper Potomac and Rock Creek. The movement along Rock Creek began, it is estimated, in 1688, and the general tendency in this locality is indicated broadly by the dates of the patents granted by the lord proprietor.[1]

For example, a tract called Blue Plains on the south side of the Eastern Branch and within the District was conveyed to George Thompson by Lord Baltimore in 1662; also the adjoining tracts of St. Elizabeth and Giesborough in 1663, while on the north side of the Eastern Branch and comprising a broad belt of land extending from that stream northward including the present site of the capitol building and the land for some distance to the north was Duddington's pasture, a tract of some fourteen hundred acres. In 1663 this tract was also conveyed by Lord Baltimore to George Thompson.

[1] A copy of the original patent for Duddington pasture and a record of subsequent deeds of some of the land within the site of the city are to be found in United States *vs.* M. F. Morris, *et al.*, Potomac Flats Case. Record, Vol. 6, p. 367.

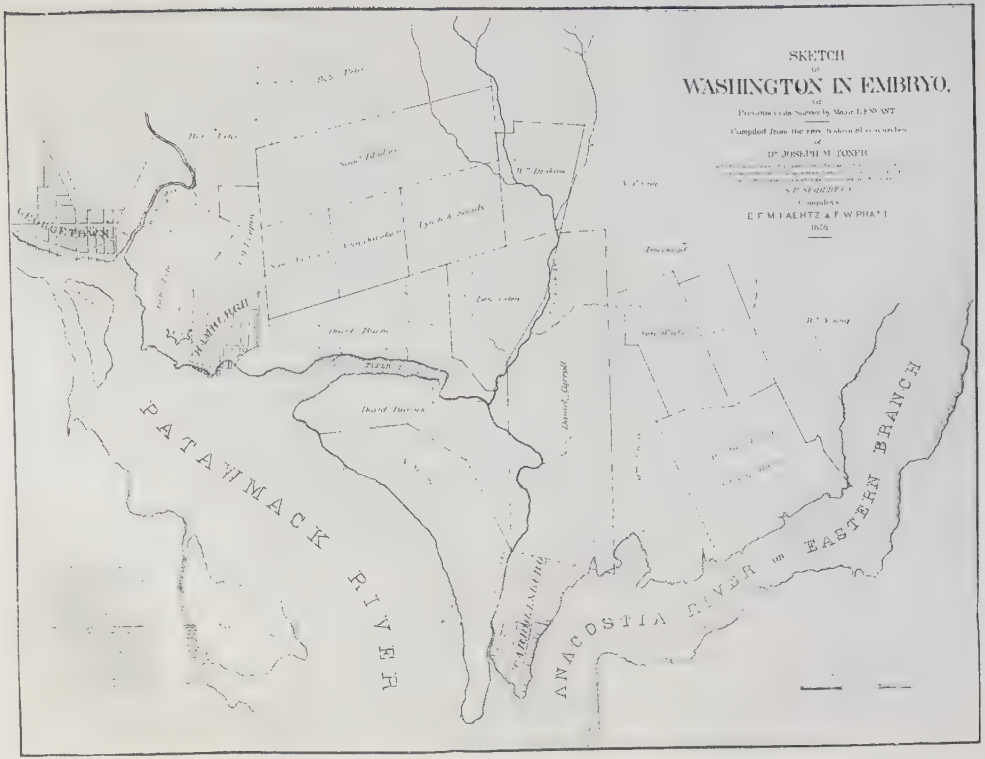
The next year John Langworth acquired a tract of six hundred acres known as the Widow's Mite, and occupying that portion of the site of Washington which lies to the northward from the Naval Medical School Hospital at 24th and E streets, N. W. A part of this tract, together with a portion of the Vineyard patented to William Hutchinson in 1696, with portions of other tracts, was merged in a tract called Mexico, owned by Robert Peter, a leading merchant of Georgetown, whose holdings extended along Rock Creek and the Potomac.

Beall's Levels, containing two hundred and twenty-five acres, was patented in 1703 to Ninian Beall, a Scotchman who lived at Upper Marlboro, and who also acquired the tract, Rock of Dumbarton, upon a portion of which Georgetown was located.

The lord proprietor to whom the entire territory of Maryland had been given did not depend upon the sale of the lands for the profits of his government, as he had from the colony other sources of income. This is shown in the consideration named in the patent of Duddington pasture which for the fourteen hundred acres is stated to be one pound, sixteen shillings sterling "or in commodities." George Thompson held the land for seven years, and when he deeded it to Thomas Notley the latter paid him forty thousand pounds of tobacco.

An incident in the history of one of the tracts referred to as lying to the south of the Eastern Branch is related by Edward D. Neill in his account of Maryland in the book entitled "Terra Mariæ." He states that shortly after the middle of the seventeenth century, James Pancoast, a watchmaker apprenticed in London, was kidnapped and sold to a man in Maryland. By his industry he obtained a tract of land that came to be known as Giesborough. Having been drowned, and as he was never married, his estate was unclaimed for a long time and reverted to the proprietary. In the year 1770 two brothers of the deceased, early settlers in Burlington County, New Jersey, brought suit to recover the property.

There is also a record of a tract of land called Scotland Yard, belonging to Captain Robert Troope, and lying to the north of where the capitol building now stands. Duddington Manor, or




PROPERTY LINES OF OWNERS OF CITY'S SITE.

pasture, with its fourteen hundred acres, as determined by a more exact survey in 1721, was left by the will of Thomas Notley dated 1679 to his godson Notley Rozier. The latter married Jane Diggs, and their only child, Eleanor Rozier, married Daniel Carroll. The title to the property then vested in the only son of the latter, Charles Carroll, Jr. The eldest son of the latter, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, was the owner of the main portion of this tract when the city was laid out. For in the year 1758 a section of Duddington Manor was conveyed by Charles Carroll, Jr., of Prince George County, to his stepmother Ann Young, the second wife of the first Daniel Carroll. This holding comprised four hundred acres, which extended along the river from its junction with the Eastern Branch north to a point above the railroad bridge at the south end of Maryland Avenue.

Ann Young's first husband, Benjamin Young, the father of Notley Young, died in 1754. He came from England and served for a number of years as land commissioner under Lord Baltimore. A tract of land belonging to him and lying near the northern original limits of the city was inherited by his son, Notley Young, and became a part of the Youngsboro tract previously owned by Notley Young. The latter married Mary Diggs, and by deed dated March 21, 1762, his mother, Ann Young, conveyed to him the tract of land in the southern section of the city then known as Duddington pasture land, where according to the deed in 1758 from Charles Carroll, Jr., to Ann Young, "the dwelling house of the said Ann Young stands."

It is supposed this was the house which subsequently became the home of Notley Young, where he was living when the city was laid out. It was built of brick, two stories and an attic, fifty by forty feet, and stood in what became G Street between 9th and 10th streets, S. W.[1] The first Daniel Carroll of Duddington was the great-uncle of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the signer of the Declaration of Independence. His son, Charles Carroll, Jr., of Duddington or Carrollsburg, the latter being the name of the town site which he laid off on a portion of his property

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 16, p. 3.

to the east of Greenleaf's Point, was born Sept. 12, 1729. He came from Ireland, as did his brother Daniel Carroll, the latter settling at Upper Marlboro on a branch of the Patuxent about fourteen miles southeast of Washington, where he engaged in business as a merchant. He married Eleanor Darnall, the daughter of Henry Darnall, who owned an estate called Woodyard a few miles southwest of Upper Marlboro.[1]

In the year 1668 Henry Darnall received a patent for a tract of land containing some six thousand acres, which lay on both sides of Rock Creek, and extended from within the bounds of the District northward, including a portion of what is now Rock Creek Park, Takoma, Forest Glen and Silver Spring. Nine miles north of the centre of the city of Washington and near what is now known as Forest Glen, the Carrolls, probably some years prior to the revolution, made their home. Here the son was living, who was known as Daniel Carroll of Upper Marlboro and also of Rock Creek, when he was appointed one of the commissioners of the city of Washington. At that time his nephew, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, was living in his farmhouse near Greenleaf's Point, but when the first work of the survey of the site of the city was begun in the spring of 1791, he started the erection of a large brick house on Square 736, between 1st, 2d, E and F streets, S. E.[2]

A portion of the tract called Beall's Levels surveyed for Ninian Beall in 1703 was resurveyed for James Burnes, a Scotchman, in 1769.[3]

He died before he had obtained a patent, but had occupied the land for a number of years. His eldest son, David Burnes, secured a patent for the land in 1774. This tract, irregular in shape, lay east of 19th Street, and just south of New York Avenue, and extended eastward quite to 1st Street, W., and with the southern boundary at the Mall, thus including the whole of

[1] Biographical Sketch of the Most Rev. John Carroll. John Carroll Brent, Baltimore, 1843.

[2] Life and Correspondence of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Kate M. Rowland, N.Y., 1898.

[3] Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 139; also list of early patents of land within the bounds of the city.

what became the central portion of the city lying on each side of Pennsylvania Avenue.

An unusual combination of names in a certificate of survey recorded in the land records of Maryland, has perhaps made it the best known of all the ancient records of this locality. On June 5, 1663, a tract of four hundred acres of land called Rome was surveyed for Thomas Pope, and subsequently owned by Francis Pope. It is described in part as "lying on the east side of the Annacostone river," and one line of which extended to "a bounded oak standing at the north of a bay or indent called Tiber." [1]

While it is impossible to determine from the description of the instrument the exact location, yet it is held by competent authority that it was included within the original bounds of the city of Washington. In the year 1818, John Brewer, at that time register of the Maryland land office, in a letter written on this subject to Thomas Law, stated "that Mr. Callahan, the former register with whom I wrote twenty-five years ago, has often mentioned to me the circumstance of the city of Washington being located on the same land." [2]

A tract of land best known as Widow's Mite and lying just beyond the original boundary of the city north of Florida Avenue, and extending from about 17th Street, W., extended to Rock Creek, came at an early period into the possession of Anthony Holmead, an Englishman. As he died childless, his property passed to his nephew, also named Anthony Holmead. The tract of land included a portion that fell within the bounds of the city, and Anthony Holmead's name appears in the agreement made in 1791 between the commissioners of the city

[1] Liber 6, folio 318, Land Records of Maryland.

[2] National Intelligencer, May 29, 1818. Among the Bozeman family papers in the manuscript division of the library of congress, is an opinion dated 1763 of C. N. Goldsborough, a Maryland lawyer, construing the will of one John Pope. In the course of this opinion, it is stated that John Pope made his will in the year 1702. A reference is made to his property, a tract called Rome. Also to his brother Robert Pope, of Bristol, England, all of which, though indefinite, serves to give some form to the shadowy Francis Pope as he appears in the early history of the federal city.

and the original proprietors. In the year 1795 he sold a portion of his property where his house was located to Gustavus Scott, one of the commissioners of the city, and this subsequently passed into the possession of Joel Barlow, who gave it the name of Kalorama. On the brow of the hill adjoining his old homestead on the east, Anthony Holmead, the same year he sold to Scott, built a two-story brick house, which now fronts on the north side of S Street, between 22d and 23d streets. It remained in possession of the family for one hundred and seven years, and is still well preserved.

Benjamin Stoddert and James M. Lingan, merchants of Georgetown, acquired a portion of the Widow's Mite as early as the year 1784,[1] and the names of both appear in the list of original proprietors. Lingan's holding comprised land in the vicinity of Dupont Circle.

In a receipt given for the sale of certain lots in Hamburg in the year 1768 by Jacob Funk, more than a century after the survey certificate of Thomas Pope, the property is described as lying "between Rock Grick and Goos Grick," showing that the latter name was also an early designation of that stream. The name Tiber appears in the first map of the city, which was made by L'Enfant in the year 1791, and it was applied to this stream, which had its origin in two branches that flowed from the heights encircling the north of the original city and uniting at a point at M Street just east of North Capitol Street, passed along Second Street, N. W., at the base of the elevation where the capitol building is located, and thence to the westward, where it emptied into the Potomac. At that time it also bore the name of Goose Creek.[2]

The rather lofty name of Tiber in contrast with the humbler appellation gave point to one of the stanzas in the satirical verses on the city written by Tom Moore, the Irish poet who visited Washington in 1804.

[1] Cranch Circuit Court Reports, Vol. 1, p. 69.

[2] "Where the road crosses Goose Creek in going from Georgetown to the Eastern Branch." Washington to Deakins and Stoddert, Philadelphia, Feb. 3, 1791. Washington's Letter Book, 1790–1793, Vol. XI.

Two brothers, William and Abraham Young, and their sister, Ann Young, who married Aquilla Wheeler, owned tracts of farm lands bordering the extreme eastern edge of the city. It was from the lands of Aquilla Wheeler at the foot of 14th Street E., at its juncture with Virginia Avenue and a short distance south of the present Pennsylvania Avenue bridge, the ferry started, operated by Wheeler, which later became known as the Upper Ferry. The date of the establishment of this ferry is unknown, but as three roads led to it through the site of the city, it was much in use as a means of communication between southern Maryland and not only Georgetown but the country to the north and the highways to Bladensburg and Frederick.[1]

It may be concluded that the prospects of the site of the federal city, as also its vicinity, presented attractions over other localities in the domain of Lord Baltimore, for there several of the men who held office under the lord proprietor acquired large tracts of land, and in some cases established homes. One of these was Benjamin Young, the father of Notley Young, and a land commissioner under Lord Baltimore.

Then there was Thomas Notley, an early owner of Duddington Manor, who was prominent officially in colonial Maryland. His godson, Notley Rozier, to whom the property was left by will, intermarried in the Carroll family, which was strongly represented in the locality.

Another colonial official was Thomas Darnall, the father-in-law of Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek.

The rise of towns both in Maryland and Virginia was slow in spite of the encouragement given by the state authorities, especially of Maryland, to promote such centres.[2]

[1] After the city was laid out, Abraham Young built a residence of brick just beyond the limits on 15th Street, opposite D Street, which was torn down in 1912, and where he made his home. This house, and the one erected about the same time by Anthony Holmead, are the only homes of original proprietors that survived to so late a period the changes of the years. Abraham Young Mansion, Allen C. Clark. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 12.

[2] Maryland Local Institutions. L. W. Whelan. J. H. U. Studies, 3d Series, Vols. VI and VII.

It was early recognized that the material interests of the community suffered because of the lack of convenience of trade and access to needed supplies, which are to be found in all communities where are collected those who are engaged in other lines of activity than agriculture. Under the existing system there could be but two classes, the planters and the laborers. The intermediate class of merchants and artisans of all the various trades were in the earlier years lacking, and in consequence the community which produced nothing but agricultural products and that, too, mainly the one staple of tobacco, was expending practically its entire income away from home. It did not have the use of the proceeds of its own industry and was rapidly becoming a debtor class. The plantation system showed this vital economic defect in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in precisely the same manner as in the cotton states of the south a century and more later.

Towns both in Maryland and Virginia had their beginnings in the various shipping ports where tobacco was brought to be loaded on vessels. Here were located the custom-houses, where a portion of the public revenue was collected, and here were also the warehouses or tobacco inspection houses established by laws regulating the quality and the grade of tobacco sent abroad. For, tobacco was not only the staple of trade but was the principal medium of exchange, and was used to pay state taxes and church tithes. Practically all obligations were payable in tobacco.

The inspection houses were also called "rolling houses," and the roads leading to them were termed rolling roads. As wheeled vehicles were not of practical use, the tobacco was placed in hogsheads weighing nine hundred and fifty to eighteen hundred pounds, and saplings were fastened at each end of a pole serving as an axle. Horses or men were attached to these rude shafts and the hogshead was rolled along to the port of shipment.[1]

A species of warehouse certificate was early introduced as

[1] History of Western Maryland. J. Thomas Scharf, Philadelphia, 1882.

a medium of facilitating dealing in tobacco. Under the Virginia law of 1730 the justices of the peace constituting the court in each county of Virginia, each year appointed inspectors at the tobacco warehouses, located on the Virginia bays and rivers at a distance of about twelve or fourteen miles apart. Such officials were appointed under the Maryland law of 1748 by the church vestries.

The duty of the inspectors was to receive the good and merchantable tobacco, and not only rejecting but burning what was pronounced to be bad and defective. "Crop notes" were given to the planters for such of the tobacco as passed inspection, and as they conveyed absolutely the title, they passed freely from hand to hand. In this way it was possible for the planter to sell his tobacco in the most convenient market.[1]

It was not until 1680 the site of the town of Norfolk was surveyed. It was made an incorporated borough in 1736. Williamsburg, Va., was built in 1705, and created a borough or market town in 1722. Annapolis, Md., was incorporated in 1696 and received a charter in 1708. Baltimore, Md., was

[1] Description of Virginia Commerce, Muir's Bookkeeping Modernized, 3d ed., 1784. A list is given of the location of inspection houses in that state, and of the twelve on the Potomac are mentioned Acquia, Quantico, Occoquan, Hunting Creek and Falls.

Hunting Creek was also known as Belle Haven, and later on as Alexandria, while Falls presumably refers to some point in the vicinity of the Little Falls above Georgetown.

The letter book of Robert Carter of Nomini, Westmoreland Co., Va., of the probable date of 1770 or 1771, gives the names of four merchants and factors residing at Colchester on the Occoquan, and of eight at Dumfries on the Quantico River. The merchants and factors residing at Alexandria are given as follows: Hooe and Harrison, Stewart and Hubbard, Fitzgerald and Piers, Harper and Hartshorn (dissolved), John Allison, Wm. Sadler, Robt. Adams & Co., Henby and Culder, Wm. Hayburne, wheat purchasers; George Gilpin and Thomas Kilpatrick, inspectors of flour; McCawley and Mayer import British goods, which they sell by wholesale; Wm. Wilson, seller of British goods, who buys tobacco, and also John Locke and John Muir, Brown and Finley, they import goods for Philadelphia and purchase wheat and tobacco, as also does Josiah Wilson; Robert Dove & Co., distillers; Carlyle and Dalton sells rum and sugar. William and Mary College Quarterly, Vol. II, p. 245.

created in 1729 by the assembly as a market and port of entry. At Garrison's Landing at the head of navigation of the Eastern Branch, the town of Bladensburg, Md., was laid out in 1742. It soon became quite a centre of trade and was the headquarters of several of the large English concerns trading in this country. About the time of the revolution its business began to decline. William Wirt, who was born there, in his reminiscences of his boyhood days mentions several of the merchants of those days, Christopher Lowndes, Robert Dick and others.

Authority was given by the Virginia assembly to lay out a town at Hunting Creek Warehouse in 1743, although the name Alexandria was applied to the place by an act of the previous year, when provision was made for holding fairs there. The site of Georgetown was laid out in building lots by authority of the Maryland law of 1751, and on land "adjacent to the inspection house called George Gordon's Rolling House." [1]

The sixty acres selected for the town included land owned by George Gordon and George Beall. The former acquired his holding, comprising some three hundred acres, in the year 1734, when it received the name of Rock Creek Plantation, and it is conjectured about that time the inspection house which stood on his land and on the south side of M Street just west of Wisconsin Avenue was erected.

Gordon was a member of the county court when Frederick County was created, and also served as sheriff of the county.[2]

George Beall, the other original proprietor, inherited from his father, Ninian Beall, a tract called the Rock of Dumbarton, and there according to tradition preserved in the reminiscences of his great grandson he set up his tent in the "ground occupied by Miss English's Seminary," the northeast corner of 30th and N streets.[3]

It is conjectured George Beall was the first settler. He was not disposed to part with his property, and so the value of the

[1] History of Western Maryland. J. Thomas Scharf, Philadelphia, 1882.

[2] Old Georgetown. Taggart.

[3] Reminiscences of Georgetown, D.C. Rev. T. B. Balch, Washington, 1859.

land was fixed by the jury, which his refusal to sell made necessary to summon. Under the law he had the right of the first choice of lots, and in reluctantly exercising that right he sturdily or surlily gave notice that his acceptance of the course pursued, which was due to favor, "shall not debar me from future redress from the commissioners or others. I have the right of a British subject. I ask no more, God save King George!" [1]

The jury appointed to condemn the land returned its value at 280 pounds currency, or $744.66, or $12.44 per acre.[2]

The town as thus laid out was bounded on the east by 30th Street and on the north by M Street, with the Potomac on the two other sides. "As early as 1703," it is stated by Hugh T. Taggart in the paper on Old Georgetown, referred to above, "there was a landing on the Georgetown side of Rock Creek, where it entered the Potomac, called Saw Pit Landing; this landing shows that the place had then some importance as a trading post."

Jacob Funk, a German resident, near Frederick, Md., owned a tract of land that subsequently lay within the limits of the city of Washington, which he divided into building lots in the year 1768, making a town site called Hamburg, and also known as Funkstown. This tract extended from a short distance west of what is now 19th Street, N. W., to west of 23d Street, and from H Street, S., to the river. The lots had a frontage of some one hundred feet and a depth of about two hundred, and there were two hundred and eighty-seven of them.

Two years later Charles Carroll, Jr., of Duddington, also made a subdivision, occupying the neck of land east of James Creek, or Greenleaf's Point, or from Third Street, S. W., to 1st Street, S. E., and from N Street, S., to the Eastern Branch. The lots were similar in size to those in the Hamburg subdivision, and were two hundred and sixty-seven in number. In both instances the streets were narrow as compared with

[1] Reminiscences of George Watterston. Daily National Intelligencer, Feb. 27, 1852. It is supposed the name of the town perpetuates that of this early but evidently independent property owner.

[2] The same.

those in the plan of the city of Washington. The Carrollsburgh lots were disposed of through a lottery.[1]

It is probable the proposed settlement of Hamburg was suggested by the promise of the locality on the east side of Rock Creek becoming a point for the river trade, as well as Georgetown on the west side. Carrollsburgh did, in fact, become such a centre, although not in a large way.[2]

Neither of the proposed settlements of Hamburg and Carrollsburgh attracted many people, and but few houses were located in either place.

The Maryland town, before it reached the corporate stage, had no separate existence from the county in which it was located. There was no local government. The commissioners named in the act to lay out the town were a self-perpetuating body with powers limited to the disposition of the lots and the adjustment of disputes between lot owners. Taxes were laid by the county court, and the county justices or parish vestry exercised their functions in the town as in the county, or parish.[3]

In line with the policy of promoting trade centres was the encouragement given to holding fairs which were familiar events to those who had been brought up in Europe. By the law of 1742 the Virginia assembly, and by the act authorizing the laying out of the town of Georgetown in 1751, the Maryland assembly gave their sanction to holding fairs semi-annually in the spring and the fall both at Alexandria and Georgetown. As the Maryland law expressed it, such events "may prove an encouragement to the back inhabitants and others to bring commodities there to sell and vend," while the Virginia enactment expressed the conclusion that it would

[1] Advertisement in the Georgetown Weekly Ledger, Nov. 26, 1791, to holders of certain tickets to whom conveyances of lots have not been made.

[2] "For Glasgow, the ships Thetis and Willin are now receiving their cargoes at the port of Carrollsburg." Times and Potomac Packet, Oct. 27, 1790.

[3] The Financial History of Baltimore. J. H. Hollander, Baltimore, 1899.

afford an opportunity for "the sale and vending of all manner of cattle, victuals, provisions, goods, wares, and merchandise."

In both instances all persons coming and going to the fair, together with their goods, were exempt from all arrests and attachments except for capital offences and breaches of the peace. While the primary purpose of these gatherings was trade and providing a market for not merely the products of the earth, but for merchandise, they also served to satisfy that social instinct which delights in the mere contact with one's fellows.

At such centres as Williamsburg and Annapolis, especially when the state legislatures were in session, large numbers of the planters had establishments where they lived gay and hospitable lives. They had fine equipages and the "drawing rooms," as the more pretentious social occasions were termed, were attended by a company that in dress, manners and wit were said to rival similar functions held at the first capitals of Europe.

The houses that remain confirm the accounts that have come down of the elegance and the profuseness of life at such centres. But for the most part the towns did not grow, and they remained for a long period mainly distinguished by the location there of the custom-house, and in some cases, of the court-house. In the entire state of Maryland in 1756 the white population numbered 107,963, while there were 46,225 blacks. Twenty-three years after Baltimore was laid out it contained only twenty-five houses and two hundred inhabitants.[1]

At that time the surveyors were marking out the streets of Georgetown. Public highways were unknown. Rolling roads made by tobacco hogsheads and bridle paths used by pack horses were the chief means of communication. The main road through the District was what was known as the Georgetown-Bladensburg Road, and from the earliest time until steam came into use it was an artery of travel between the north and the south. Two sections of this road still exist.

[1] Griffith's Annals of Baltimore.

One is Florida Avenue from the ford at the present P Street bridge to 7th Street. From 7th Street the road trended to the northeast and mounted the encircling rim of hills. A spur ran to the south, the course of which is preserved in part in the lines of the modern Bladensburg Road which comes to the original bounds of the city at Maryland Avenue and 15th Street, N. E. In the early days it passed on to the south, paralleling the Eastern Branch, to the ferry at the foot of 14th Street, S. E. On the east side of the Eastern Branch was also a road from Bladensburg that led to a point on the Potomac nearly opposite Alexandria, where there was a ferry at a very early day. It crossed the Marlboro Road near the Eastern Branch ferry.[1] The western section of the post road beyond Rock Creek passed through Georgetown to near the foot of Wisconsin Avenue. At that time the section of Wisconsin Avenue south of M Street was known as Water Street, and led to the ferry across the Potomac to the Virginia shore. While the post road crossed Rock Creek by a ford, yet the rising importance of Georgetown was indicated by the erection of a bridge — the first in the District — over the creek about on the line of M Street two years before the residence bill became a law.[2] From this point a road passed through the city and by a ford in the Tiber Creek just north of the present site of the capitol to the Eastern Branch [3] which indicates in a general way the course of the old thoroughfare between Georgetown and the Eastern Branch that was wiped out by the city plan.[4] It was probably a spur from this road that trended to the north and west of the capitol site, thence to the east of Massachusetts Avenue and 4th Street, N. W., and on to the north,

[1] Ferries did not fall under the regulation of the Maryland law until quite late in the eighteenth century, and hence there is no record of the early ones.

[2] Old Georgetown. Taggart. The bridge was built in 1788.

[3] Account of the City. George Watterston, Intelligencer, Aug. 26, 1847.

[4] The only reference to this highway is found in a letter of Washington to Messrs. Deakins and Stoddert. Philadelphia, Feb. 3, 1791. Washington's Letter Book. 1790–1793, Vol. XI.

probably connecting with the Rock Creek Church Road.[1] By means of the Rock Creek Church Road, the southern section of which, ending at the original bounds of the city at Connecticut Avenue, and Florida Avenue, is now known in part as Columbia Road, and the portion east of New Hampshire Avenue bears the old name; the course of travel flowed north through Montgomery County to Rockville and still north to the Baltimore-Frederick Road. In addition to the Bladensburg, Marlboro and Alexandria roads which centred in Georgetown, there was also a thoroughfare from that place to Frederick, the southern portion of which it is supposed coincides with what came to be called the Rockville Road. It is also conjectured that this section of the road, in the early years, followed more closely the banks of the Potomac and that which is known as Wisconsin Avenue came into use at a later period, perhaps about the time of the war of the revolution.[2] But while the main portion of the population clung to the waterways, roads were of minor consequence.

The prime need for the development of the Potomac as a factor not only in promoting trade but in binding the interests of the growing population west of the Alleghanies to those of the eastern section was early recognized, and especially by such a leading spirit as Washington, who, on his hunting and surveying trips, and then in 1753, when he went to Fort Pitt as the official representative of the English government, through the governor of Virginia, to protest against the erection there of a fort by the French, had an opportunity to become acquainted with the character of the country.

He foresaw the general as well as the local advantages of making the Potomac the centre for the trade of the western

[1] In an advertisement of lots for sale at Massachusetts Avenue and 4th Street, N. W., the property is described as "bounded on the east by the turnpike road from the capitol to Montgomery Court House." Intelligencer, Oct. 1, 1811.

[2] The first topographic map of the District as well as the first attempt in its cartography is the one prepared by Andrew Ellicott and published in 1792. It has special value because it shows the roads leading into the city, but unfortunately an outline plan of the city is inserted, so that all these thoroughfares stop at the boundaries.

country, that was sure to grow with increasing volume. But he perceived also the dangers in the separating tendencies in the east and in the west, and especially in the event the commerce of the Ohio Valley should find an outlet down the Mississippi, which was then in control of the French.

At the same time, but more especially in the later period of the river improvement movement, and even after the Potomac Company had been formed, opposition to the scheme came from central Virginia, where it was desired that the James River should be made a trade centre, while also in the later period regard for the growing trade of Baltimore arrayed a large and influential element in Maryland against the project of a Georgetown centre of commerce.[1]

In the year 1748, the Ohio Company was formed to promote the settlement of the Ohio as well as to carry on trade with the Indians, which was another recognition of the availability of the Potomac.[2] The boats of that company began in the year 1749 to ply between the Great Falls and a trading post on the present site of the city of Cumberland, where in 1754 Fort Cumberland was built. At that time there was only an Indian trail west of Fort Cumberland, while for eighty miles east of that post there was scarcely a settlement.[3]

England's struggle with the French for the possession of the Mississippi Valley was closed with General Wolfe's victory in 1759 over the French at Quebec. But five years before that the aggressive policy of the French to keep the English out of the country west of the Alleghanies led to numerous forays by their Indian allies on the frontiers of Maryland and Virginia. These colonies were compelled to defensive measures, although what was done was greatly weakened by the contest then going on between the colonists and the royal

[1] A New Chapter in the Early Life of Washington. John Pickell, New York, 1856.

[2] History of Cumberland, Maryland. W. H. Lowdermilk, Washington, 1879.

[3] Early Development of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Project. George W. Ward. Johns Hopkins University Studies Series, Vol. VII, Nos. 9, 10, 11.

government of Virginia, and the proprietary government of Maryland.

The seriousness of the situation led England in 1755 to send General Edward Braddock to the scene of hostilities with two regiments. In the spring of that year these forces landed at Alexandria, Va., and there Braddock had a conference with the governors of the colonies. As the result of the advice given at that time Braddock decided upon his route to Fort Duquesne, where the French had established a military post in defiance of English protests. The Potomac route, following the course of that river to its head waters and thence north to the head waters of the Ohio, was decided upon, although west of Frederick there were no roads. The desired point might have been reached by marching north from Frederick into Pennsylvania, where were the advantages of a settled country and roads, but Braddock's advisers were influenced more by economic than by military considerations, as the people of Virginia and Maryland desired to have a road opened to the head of the navigation of the Potomac.[1]

The delays caused by the necessity of building a road as the troops advanced gave the enemy ample time to concentrate their forces and to learn of Braddock's movements, and this circumstance, together with the English general's refusal to change his military tactics so as to enable him to meet his savage opponents on a more equal footing, led to the bloody defeat.[2]

Braddock's forces left Alexandria in two detachments. One passed north through Virginia to the meeting-place at Fort Cumberland, while the other marched along the Potomac to the ferry and then crossed over to Georgetown, whence they proceeded by the Frederick Road.

According to tradition, the English commander landed at a large rock, a portion of which is still to be seen in Potomac Park, although it is now below the existing level to the south

[1] Montcalm and Wolfe. Francis Parkman.

[2] Narrative and Critical History of America. Justin Winsor, Vol. V.

of the grounds of the Naval Medical School Hospital. This rock has long borne the name of Braddock's Rock, but in the early records of this locality it was known as the Key of Keys or Quay of all Quays.

At that time it was a part of a large formation on the banks of the river, now separated from it by nearly a quarter of a mile of filled ground. It afforded a good landing-place. It was from this quarry-like formation that stone was taken that was used in the foundations of the capitol and the White House. As to Braddock's using that landing for his troops on their way from Alexandria, it seems a reasonable conjecture that he would rather have chosen the regular ferry landing at Georgetown, a short distance farther up the river. In this way the soldiers would have been on the same side of Rock Creek as the Frederick Road, which was the point of destination, instead of landing on the east side of the Creek and then fording that stream.[1]

The residents of Georgetown were represented in the Maryland Provincials equipped for service in the war, and a company under the command of Alexander Beall, the surveyor of the town, with Samuel Wade Magruder as lieutenant, went to the front.[2]

To raise a revenue to meet the expenses of the war, the Maryland assembly in 1765 placed a tax on the estates of bachelors, and among those who fell in that class were the following living in and near the present District of Columbia. Hugh Riley, Rock Creek, Nathaniel Magruder, Inspector Rock Creek, Robert Peter, in Georgetown, Anthony Holmead, near the mouth of Rock Creek, Walter Eavins, on the Eastern Branch, Baston Lucas, near the Eastern Branch, William Needham, Bladensburg, Robert Mundell, Georgetown, and Archibald Orme, north of Rock Creek.[3]

[1] The records of Braddock's expedition and contemporary accounts afford no clew of the exact spot where the landing was made. The case of the upholders of the east and of the west side of Rock Creek is to be found in Braddock's Rock, by Marcus Benjamin, Washington, 1899, and in Old Georgetown, by Hugh T. Taggart.

[2] Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 165.

[3] The Rise of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the District of Columbia. Arthur S. Brown, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 9.

Trade considerations appearing as an influence in a conference on a purely military question such as the one that took place between the commander of the English forces and the governors of the colonies of Maryland and Virginia serves to illustrate their vital place in the lives and thoughts of the people. As pointed out in a previous chapter, an event of such significance as the calling of a convention of the representatives of all the states to devise a better form of government, and the beginning of the movement which resulted in the framing of the constitution of the United States had its inception in the proposal to bring together representatives of the two states of Maryland and Virginia to consider trade regulation for the Potomac River. But long before the year 1785 the need of providing facilities for carrying on the commerce of the Potomac region had led to serious and repeated efforts to make that river navigable. The first examination of the river, to ascertain its navigability from Fort Cumberland to Alexandria, was made in January, 1755, by Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, and Sir John St. Clair, and the conclusion was then reached that the river could be made free for the passage of boats by the removal of the rocks at the Great Falls. But nothing was done.[1]

During the years 1770–1772 and 1774 Washington visited the sources of the Potomac and made careful studies of the country lying to the west between that point and the navigable waters of the western rivers. Surveys were also made by others. Portions of Washington's Journals giving accounts of these trips were published in the newspapers of the day.[2]

In 1770 Washington pointed out in a letter to the governor of Maryland the advantages to that state and to Virginia of making the Potomac "a channel of commerce between Great Britain and that immense territory." The response to this and other efforts was the passage by the Virginia assembly in

[1] History of Cumberland, Md. W. H. Lowdermilk, Washington, 1877.

[2] A New Chapter in the Early Life of Washington. John Pickell, New York, 1856.

the year 1772 of an act creating a company with authority to render the Potomac navigable from Fort Cumberland to tide-water. In the same year John Ballandine, the owner of a tract of land at Little Falls, endeavored to enlist interest in the colony and among English merchants in a plan for improving the navigation of the river, and among his subscribers are enrolled the names of George Washington, Thomas Johnson, Jr., Thomas Ringgold, William Deakins, Jr., Francis Deakins and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. But these efforts resulted in nothing.[1]

Again in 1774 a bill for the Potomac improvement was brought by Washington before the Virginia assembly, of which he was a member, but the divergence of interests, and more particularly the absorption of the public mind in the issues involved in the opening of the great contest with Great Britain for independence, served to prevent final action. Shortly after the close of the revolutionary war Washington in his retirement at Mt. Vernon resumed the advocacy of his favorite project and engaged in an extensive correspondence on the subject.

Jefferson shared his views in this particular, and with him as well as with Washington at this time the general welfare of the people by this binding together two great sections of the country was the prime consideration. In the year 1784 the Potomac Company was chartered by Virginia, and in the following year by Maryland. This action by the two states was taken in furtherance of a report made by a commission composed of representatives both from Maryland and Virginia favoring the improvement of the Potomac. Washington was one of the representatives of Virginia, while a member of the Maryland delegation was Gustavus Scott, afterwards one of the commissioners of the city of Washington.

Thomas Johnson of Frederick, Md., who had in congress in 1775 nominated Washington as commander-in-chief of the army, was a member of the board of directors. In after years Washington selected Johnson to serve on the first board of

[1] Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 177.

commissioners for the city of Washington. As president of the Potomac Company, which was organized in 1785, Washington was the active spirit in the enterprise. He terminated his official connection with the company only when he became the head of the new government of the country.

The plan adopted by the Potomac Company, and which it attempted to carry out, was what was termed "sluice navigation" in the improvement of the bed of the river by the removal of rocks, and forming a channel, which was the usual mode of securing inland navigation in England. At that period there was in that country but one example of the type of an independent canal with locks and the utility of that method had not at that time been satisfactorily demonstrated. In addition, the sluice method was cheaper, an important consideration in promoting an enterprise in a country that had just engaged in an exhausting war. In fact, it was with difficulty the stock of the company was placed and the instalments paid.[1]

Besides removing obstacles from the bed of the river, the company built canals around the Little Falls, the Great Falls, Seneca Falls, Shenandoah and House Falls. The works on the Virginia side of Great Falls may still be seen for a good part of the course. The passage was cut through the solid rock. After expending nearly three quarters of a million of dollars, and after the lapse of about thirty-five years, the object of the company had only been partially accomplished, and it was succeeded by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company in 1828, and the independent canal plan was then adopted.

During the period of the existence of the Potomac Company, although a considerable sum of money was collected for tolls which were first levied in 1799, yet the only navigation possible was during the time of floods and freshets, as a joint commission of Maryland and Virginia appointed to examine the affairs of the company declared in the year 1823. According to the same authority "The whole time when goods and produce

[1] Report to the stockholders on the completion of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company to Cumberland with a sketch of the Potomac Company, Frederick, 1851.

could be stream borne on the Potomac in the course of an entire year did not exceed forty-five days."

Boats of slight draught were used in the descent of the river, and after discharging their cargoes were broken up. The more pretentious vessels made the return trip, but that was done by the laborious process of "poling." Even under such conditions quite a volume of trade passed down the Potomac, thus making Georgetown a centre for a good deal of the commerce from the lakes and the west.[1]

[1] In a paper signed by a number of business men of Georgetown, Oct. 13, 1790, offering their lands in the vicinity of Georgetown as a site for the federal town, it is enumerated among the advantages of the place that "There is seldom any swell at Georgetown, never one quarter of a mile above it. The vessels, therefore, which bring the produce down the river, can empty at Georgetown, which from their construction and the swell in the river, it is thought they can never do much below." U. S. *vs.* M. F. Morris, *et al.*, Potomac Flats Case. Record, Vol. VII, p. 2160. From war department manuscript.

## CHAPTER IV

### DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The spirit of resistance to the assertion of the claim on the part of England of the right of taxing the colonies as a source of revenue to that government found early expression in the colonies of Virginia and Maryland. The stamp act was the first of these measures to become a law by the approval of George III in February, 1765, and in May the Virginia assembly, fired by the eloquence of Patrick Henry, adopted resolutions which "started the fire." George Johnston of Alexandria was one of the supporters of these resolutions.

The law requiring the affixing of stamps on all papers was to go into effect in November of that year, but when George Mercer, distributor of stamps for Virginia, arrived in Hampton in October, 1765, he was given a hostile reception, and the attitude of the people was such that he engaged not to undertake the execution of the stamp act.

Zachariah Hood, the stamp distributor for Maryland, was burned in effigy upon his arrival in Annapolis, and the stamps were not landed in the state but taken to New York, where General Gage, the commander of the English forces in this country, was stationed. The courts of Maryland and Virginia held that business could be transacted without the use of stamps, and so instructed the court officers.

Both Maryland and Virginia indorsed the plan for a meeting of delegates from all the colonies, and while the former sent representatives to the so-called stamp congress that met in New York in October, 1765, Virginia only failed because prevented by its royalist governor.

William Murdock, one of Maryland's deputies, was the son of Rev. George Murdock, the first rector of Rock Creek

parish, and married the daughter of Colonel Thomas Addison, who built and occupied a fine house on Oxen Run opposite Alexandria. From Colonel Addison he received a portion of a tract of land known as Friendship and occupied a house which stood on the present site of the American University.[1]

The stamp act was repealed in March, 1767, and another revenue measure was devised which was finally limited to a duty on tea; but true to the principle advocated of no taxation without representation both Virginia and Maryland stood with the other colonies against receiving the tea in this country. Virginia was the first colony to adopt the plan of an inter-colonial committee of correspondence, and thus led the way, as Bancroft pointed out, to a confederation of the colonies. In Maryland the convention formed of representatives of the people was active in opposition to the measures of England and finally became the government of the colony. When the people of Boston were punished by England by the act closing the port of that city, Virginia expressed her sentiments in regard to that measure by declaring a day of fasting and prayer, and in consequence the assembly was promptly dissolved by the governor. Everywhere in both colonies the use of foreign goods was discouraged and home manufactures advocated, while it became the fashion to wear homespun and to go without tea.[2]

There was also material support given to the common cause. In August, 1774, the inhabitants of Alexandria in a few hours subscribed 350 pounds for the relief of the distressed towns of Boston and Charleston, while shiploads of provisions were sent from both colonies. Committees of correspondence were formed in the various counties to see that the non-importation agreement was carried out. Such action was indorsed in

[1] University Courier, Vol. III, p. 7.

[2] The son of Rev. Stephen B. Balch, the Presbyterian minister of Georgetown, relates in Reminiscences of Georgetown, first lecture, p. 15, "My father has repeatedly told me that the ladies of Georgetown positively refused to drink tea during the progress of the Revolution. Even the cups used at his wedding in the year 1782 were not much larger than a thimble."

Frederick County at a public meeting held, June 14, 1774, at Charles Hungerford's tavern, where the town of Rockville was subsequently established.

During that summer the committees of Charles County and Frederick County considered the case of a ship arrived in St. Mary's River with a consignment of two chests of tea to Robert Findlay, a merchant in Bladensburg, one to John Ferguson, a factor for Messrs. Findlay & Co., and one chest to Robert Peter, a merchant in Georgetown. These gentlemen were called before the committee, and as the narrative of the affair states, their attention was called to the passing of the Boston port bill, and also to the sense of America respecting the consequences of receiving such consignments, and they all agreed not to receive the tea, and in case it should be delivered they would place it in the custody of Messrs. Thomas Johns, William Deakins and Bernard O'Neal to wait the further direction of the committee.[1]

Thomas Richardson, also a Georgetown merchant, was before the committee on a similar mission and the same disposition was made as was done in the other case and the merchants were thanked for their disinterested behavior. When a vessel arrived in October, 1774, at Annapolis with over 2000 pounds of tea on board, the committee of Ann Arundel County called the consigners before it, and one of them voluntarily offered to burn the ship with its cargo, which was accordingly done. In the meantime the first continental congress had assembled in Philadelphia, Frederick County, being represented by Thomas Johnson, while George Washington was the delegate of the upper Potomac section of Virginia. In the fall of 1774 among the members of the Frederick County committee were Jacob Funk, William Deakins, Bernard O'Neal, Francis Deakins, Brooke Beall, Joseph Threlkeld, Walter Smith and Thomas Beall, all of Georgetown or its vicinity except the first named.

The readiness with which those who had brought tea into the colonies complied with the directions of these committees even at a great pecuniary sacrifice is a sufficient indication of

[1] American Archives. 4th Series, Vol. 1, p. 704.

the state of the public mind, for there is no question that public sentiment, and that too of an aroused and dangerous character, made effective and to a large extent shaped the action of these bodies. A rather unique form of punishment was devised by the committee for the upper portion of Frederick County that met at Elizabethtown, now Hagerstown, Nov. 28, 1774. The case was that of a man who had deceived the committee about the location of a chest of tea sent to him. In view of this latter circumstance the committee decided that he "should go with his hat off and with lighted torches in his hand and set fire to the tea, which he accordingly did. . . . The committee was also of the opinion that no further intercourse should be held with him." [1]

As the result of the recommendations of the continental congress, a meeting was held in Upper Marlboro in November, 1774, and a committee was appointed to carry into execution in the county the association of congress. In the list of members of this committee appear the names of William Deakins, Sr., John Addison and Thomas Gant, Jr. [2]

Towards the close of the year at Annapolis a convention of deputies for the entire state urged an increase in the flocks of sheep in order to promote woollen manufacture; also to use every effort to promote the manufacture of linen and cotton. Further it was resolved "that if the assumed power of parliament to tax the colonies shall be attempted to be carried into execution by force in the Massachusetts colony or in any other colony that the province of Maryland will support such colony to the utmost of its power."

The resolutions recommended that militia companies be formed. Of the 10,000 pounds to be raised in the state for arms and ammunition the proportion allotted to Prince George County

[1] American Archives. 4th Series, Vol. 1, and for much revolutionary war matter following.

[2] William Deakins, Sr., was the son of John Deakins, an Englishman who came to this country the early part of the seventeenth century and settled in Maryland. He was a resident of Prince George County. He had three sons, William, Jr., Francis and Leonard, all of whom became residents of Georgetown some time before the revolution.

was 833 pounds, to Frederick County, 1333 pounds, to Charles County, 800 pounds and to St. Mary's County, 600 pounds.[1]

On the 18th of July, 1774, a meeting of freeholders was held at Alexandria, George Washington presiding. Resolutions were adopted, giving assurance of support to the other colonies in opposition to the duties and making provision for receiving no more taxed goods. At a meeting held the following January, action relative to the formation of a militia was taken similar to that of the Prince George County convention of Maryland. The committee of the latter county had already announced a plan for raising ten companies of sixty-eight men each in the county, and of this number two companies were to be formed at Bladensburg and its neighborhood, one at Broad Creek and one at Upper Marlboro. Notley Young was a member of this committee. It was directed by the Frederick County committee that subscriptions to the quota of the county of the state fund for arms would be raised in Georgetown by William Deakins, Thomas Johns and Walter Smith.

The committee on June 21, 1775, decided to raise two companies of expert riflemen to represent Frederick County in the contest with the mother country, which the events at Concord and Lexington a few weeks before had demonstrated was to be submitted to the arbitrament of the sword. One of these companies had as its captain, Michael Cresap, while the other was led by Thomas Price.

Captain Cresap was a frontiersman, and like his father had hunted through the unbroken wilderness of the section of western Maryland that was the gateway to the vaster wilderness of the Ohio Valley. In this border-land he had spent his life, and his name had come to be associated in the current talk of the day with the murder of the family of the Indian chief Logan. Jefferson repeated this popular version of the transaction in his Notes on Virginia, but since then the responsibility for that frontier tragedy has been shown to belong to another.

Captain Cresap's company left Frederick, July 18, 1775, and marched to Cambridge, where, after travelling five hundred and fifty miles, they arrived August 8. The one hundred and

thirty men forming the company were, like their leader, from the backwoods. The men were painted like Indians, as was the practice of many of the hunters of those days. They were armed with tomahawks and rifles, wore hunting shirts and moccasins and as an eyewitness of their departure from Frederick records, "though some of them had travelled near eight hundred miles from the banks of the Ohio, they seem to walk light and easy."

"They need nothing," he adds with pride, "except water from the spring, with a little parched corn, with what they easily procure in hunting." [1]

The battle of Bunker Hill occurred June 17, 1775, and Washington chosen commander-in-chief by congress two days before on the nomination of Thomas Johnson of Frederick County, was in command of the army and welcomed this early reënforcement of the Massachusetts militia that then constituted the young army of the new republic.

Scharf, in his History of Western Maryland, says Cresap's company was the first from the south to reach Cambridge. A company of Virginia riflemen under the command of Captain Daniel Morgan arrived in Cambridge some days later. One of the battalions of Frederick County raised in 1776 was officered largely by residents in and about Georgetown. The colonel was John Murdock, the lieutenant colonel, Thomas Johns, the first major, William Brooke, and the second major, William Deakins, Jr. Another local company was commanded by Thomas Richardson, with Alexander McFadden as first lieutenant and John Peter the second lieutenant. One of the companies in the regiment that took part in the defence of Fort Washington and in other engagements around New York City was commanded by Thomas Beall, who subsequently reached the rank of colonel. It was composed of Georgetown men.[2]

[1] American Archives. 4th Series, Vol. 3. Extract of a letter to a gentleman in Philadelphia, dated Frederickstown, Md., Aug. 1, 1775.

[2] In Vol. 12, Maryland Archives, Md. Council of Safety, p. 352, is recorded under date of Oct. 15, 1776, the formation of a Georgetown company under command of Richard Smith, Capt., Lieuts. Walter

Leonard M. Deakins and his brother Francis Deakins marched from Georgetown in the summer of 1776 at the head of companies recruited in and about Georgetown. Uriah Forrest and James M. Lingan, both identified with Georgetown and the city of Washington in later years, served in the revolutionary army. One writer describes the "famous Maryland line" as "the backbone of the army." [1]

Thomas Johnson of Frederick was elected brigadier-general of the Maryland militia in June, 1776, but owing to his duties as delegate to the continental congress did not serve. He was chosen the first governor of Maryland under the constitution adopted in 1776. The skill of John Yoast of Georgetown was utilized by the Maryland authorities, and a large number of muskets made at his shop were used by the troops. During the summer of 1776 much apprehension was created by the movements of the British war vessels in the lower Potomac, and two actually did ascend the river as far as Quantico, where the troops landed and burned the house of William Brent, and having done "all the mischief in our power," as Lord Dunmore in command states in an official despatch, the enemy retired.

The growth of the population throughout Frederick County had for some time made the government of such an extended territory too great a strain upon the machinery of a Maryland county and was also a source of inconvenience to the inhabitants. As soon as the outbreak of the war made it necessary for frequent coöperation on the part of its citizens, Frederick County was practically divided to meet the emergency for prompt action. A committee was appointed for the upper portion of the county and one for the lower portion. The central meeting-place for the former was Frederick, while that for the latter was Hungerford's Tavern, where the town of Rockville was subsequently laid out.

In 1776, when a state constitution was adopted, Frederick

White and Thomas Hayes, Ensign, Thomas Sprigg. Some additional army appointments are in Vol. 16, pp. 296 and 373. See also Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 186.

[1] Maryland, proprietary, province and state. Bernard C. Steiner in Men of Mark of Maryland, Washington, 1907.

County was divided into three portions, the lower part being erected into the county of Montgomery in honor of General Montgomery, who lost his life in 1775 at Quebec. The central portion was designated as Frederick County, and the upper as Washington County. Rockville was chosen as the county seat, and seven years later notice was given of a petition of the inhabitants of Montgomery County to the assembly, asking for the removal of the court-house from Rockville to Georgetown, but that petition was not granted.[1] As one of the justices of the peace, William Deakins was a member of the first county court.

[1] Maryland Journal, Feb. 26, 1783.

# CHAPTER V

## RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL, COMMERCIAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A LITTLE more than a year after the battle of Lexington, Maryland and Virginia organized state governments and adopted constitutions. In both instances a notable feature was the provision for religious liberty, although in the case of Virginia, the declaration of rights drafted by Jefferson, and which fully enunciated the rights of the individual conscience in religious matters, was not adopted until ten years later. In Maryland, the laws providing for the support of the clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church by taxes levied on the entire community were done away with, and the form of church establishment in existence in that colony since 1692 came to an end. The struggle in Virginia over the question of the public support of the ministry, where it had the sanction of law from the early days of the colony, was protracted for three years, until finally in 1779 the system of tithes was abolished, the existing law on the subject having been suspended from year to year since the beginning of the movement towards disestablishment.[1]

In Virginia the rigor of the laws against protestant dissenters had been modified in 1699 in harmony with the English law passed ten years previously, and which conceded to those taking the oath of allegiance and supremacy and subscribing to a declaration against the real presence the right to worship in their own meeting houses provided such places were regularly registered and the ministers were licensed. But there was no recognition of the rights of Catholics, and Quakers were also outlawed. As a consequence of the legal restrictions, there were but few dissenters in Virginia. It was not until nearly the close

[1] Religious Toleration in Virginia. Henry R. McIlvane, J. H. U. Historical and Political Studies. 12th Series.

of the seventeenth century that a Presbyterian church was organized in the colony, and the first dissenting minister legally authorized to preach in Virginia was Rev. Francis Makemie, who qualified under the toleration act in 1699, and was pastor of a Presbyterian church on the Elizabeth River.[1]

In Maryland, where toleration in religion had been adopted by Lord Baltimore, the founder of the colony, as it was in Pennsylvania under William Penn, the policy had changed, influenced largely no doubt by the bitter and violent contentions and conflicts that marked the reign of the house of Stuart. The rigors of religious intoleration and persecution as expressed in the laws were severe and complete. But it is a pleasant reflection even at this distance of time, that for some years prior to the revolution, while the laws remained unchanged, their enforcement gradually became less vigorous, owing in part to the common danger felt in communities close to the frontier, as was the case both with Virginia and Maryland during the French and Indian war, and the need of united action with the mother country, so, as one writer declares, "before the adoption of the constitution religious toleration was practically secured." [2] But the people favored religious liberty, and not merely toleration, and the declaration of that principle was a distinctive feature of the new state governments set up in Maryland and Virginia; so that in these states the penal laws against Catholics were removed from the statute books, as was also done in Pennsylvania and Delaware. The restrictions laid on the freedom of action of the dissenters were removed.

[1] In an account of the country which Mr. Makemie published in London in 1705, he makes a statement about brick in the new country which gives support to the contention of those who are sceptical on the subject of the importation of this building material into the country from Europe. He says, "Here are in most places bricks to be made at every man's door for building." Quoted in The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. IV, in an account of a book written by Makemie and entitled A Plain and Friendly Persuasive to the Inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland for Promoting Towns and Cohabitations.

[2] Religious Toleration in Virginia. Henry R. McIlvane.

The increase in the population of the country along the upper Potomac can be traced to some extent in the development of the Episcopal Church, which continued to be the established church in both colonies down to the separation from the mother country. One of the four parishes created in Charles County upon the establishment of the Episcopal Church in Maryland in the year 1692 was Piscataway Parish. It is recorded that the first parish meeting was held at the residence of John Addison at Oxen Run, opposite Alexandria, and a short distance south of the bounds of the District of Columbia.

A church edifice was built three years later near the mouth of Broad Creek, which flows into the Potomac below Fort Foote. It was not until 1712 that the first service was held within the bounds of the District and at that time the rector of Broad Creek Church or St. John's Church, as it was officially known, was directed to preach in the Eastern Branch Hundred, on Sundays, once a month.[1]

Seven years later Colonel John Bradford, a member of the vestry of St. John's, presented for church uses at a meeting of the inhabitants of the Eastern Branch and Rock Creek Hundred one hundred acres of land, which now form the glebe and cemetery of Rock Creek or St. Paul's Parish. With the Eastern Branch as a dividing line, the country to the north was set off in the year 1726 as Prince George's Parish. A frame structure was erected on the Bradford tract, but was replaced by the brick structure still standing with the exception of some changes, and which was completed in 1775. In the year 1738 a chapel was built about one mile east of Rockville, which was served by the rector of Rock Creek. About half a mile from the eastern corner of the District on the road from Bladensburg, in the year 1748, a brick chapel was erected called Addison's Chapel and also St. Matthew's Chapel.[2]

[1] The old English territorial division of one hundred settlers, of whom ten families constituted a tithing.

[2] Rise of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the District of Columbia. Arthur S. Browne, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 9.

On the south side of the Potomac, where the spread of the population was slower than was the case on the Maryland side, the parish of Fairfax was erected in 1765, when a vestry was chosen, George Washington being of the number. He did not serve, however, as he was elected the same year a vestryman of Pohick Church, which was near his home at Mt. Vernon.

The parish church of Fairfax was known as Falls Church, and was located some six miles to the west of the site of Washington and so named from the proximity of the Little Falls of the Potomac. Here was located a tobacco inspection house, as well as one at Alexandria, but it may be concluded from the placing of the principal church of the parish at the Falls, as it was called, although several miles from the banks of the river, that it was then regarded as more central to the members of the parish than Alexandria, where what was known as a minor church or chapel of ease was located.

Brick structures were erected at both places, the one at Alexandria being completed in 1773. In the latter church a pew was purchased by George Washington, and he was accustomed to attend services there, so that the edifice of Christ Church, Alexandria, associated with the first president has always been one of the historic spots in that Virginia town. It stands to-day changed, but much the same as when built. It has escaped the indignity which befell both the Pohick and the Falls churches, in being deserted and left to the mercy of the elements. Both of these latter structures in later years were restored, and are again used as the pious founders intended.[1]

The Presbyterian Church gained an early foothold in this locality, due no doubt to the adherents of that denomination from Scotland and Ireland and England that formed a goodly proportion of the settlers, as planters, or as factors and merchants.[2]

As far as the influence of any one man can be traced in the history of the development of the Presbyterian Church in this

[1] Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia. Bishop Meade, Vol. 2, p. 256, Philadelphia, 1857.

[2] Notice of a meeting of The St. Andrew's Society, Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette, Nov. 28, 1792.

region it is recognized that Ninian Beall of Upper Marlboro, as it was then called, or Marlboro, as it is to-day, was a potent factor. A native of Fife, Scotland, he came to this country about 1669 and settled at Marlboro. He lived to the advanced age of one hundred and seven "and was buried probably at Fife Large, one of his farms on the Eastern Branch just beyond Bennings." [1]

A man of large business interests and of extensive property holdings, occupying a position of influence in the community, due in part to his services in the struggle of the colony with the Indians, he was able to contribute in means and in ability to advancing the interests of the church with which he was identified. As early as the year 1704 he gave ground at Marlboro where a church building was erected, thus making that church among the earliest of such organizations even in Maryland, where the Presbyterian Church in America had its origin.

Bladensburg, located at the head of the navigation of the Eastern Branch, followed Marlboro, that lay on the parallel stream of the Patuxent in contributing to the growth of the church. An organization was formed there in 1719, nearly a quarter of a century before Bladensburg had become of sufficient importance to be laid out as a town, and while it was still only the tobacco port of Garrison Landing. The minister serving at Bladensburg probably as early as 1787 also held services at Cabin John, some six miles north of Georgetown, which were no doubt attended by the adherents of that denomination living in Georgetown.

A Presbyterian church was erected at the southeast corner of M and 30th streets, Georgetown, in 1782. Rev. Thomas Bloomer Balch served as pastor for the first fifty years of its existence. Dr. Balch married the great-granddaughter of Ninian Beall and granddaughter of George Beall, the owner of the land where the town was located.[2]

[1] Reminiscences of Georgetown, D.C. Rev. T. B. Balch, Washington, 1859.

[2] The Beginnings of the Presbyterian Church in the District of Columbia. Coll. His. Soc., Vol. 8.

Presbyterian worship began in Alexandria as early as 1764, and a church building was erected there in 1774, which indicates the progress in the relaxation in the enforcement of laws against dissenters in Virginia.

As Catholic worship was forbidden in Maryland, except in private families, or in chapels connected with houses of priests, and was not permitted at all in Virginia, the church prior to the close of the revolutionary war had an uncertain existence.[1]

Maryland had been from the beginning a mission field for the Jesuit Fathers, and two of them accompanied the first of Lord Baltimore's settlers to this country. Subsequently, owing to differences of opinion between Lord Baltimore and the Jesuits over the assertion of the latter of the independence of ecclesiastical law to secular law, he requested that they be recalled and secular clergy sent in their places. The controversy was settled by the Jesuits conceding the position taken by Lord Baltimore.[2]

The Jesuits continued their missionary labors in Maryland, and among other centres had an establishment at Port Tobacco, some thirty miles south of Washington, and it is supposed that priests from that place visited the Catholic families in and about the District and in private houses performed the offices of the church. The house of Ann Young, and when afterwards occupied by her son, Notley Young, on G Street, S. W., according to tradition was often the scene of religious services, as was that of Richard Queen, erected about 1722, in the northeastern section of the District, where Langdon is situated and where afterwards Queen's Chapel was built.

Two years before the war for independence broke out, a young priest arrived in this country from Europe. This was Rev. John Carroll, who subsequently rose to the dignity of the head of the Catholic Church in this country and was the first Catholic bishop in America. The brother of Daniel Carroll

[1] At the close of the war Bishop Carroll states there were but nineteen priests in Maryland and five in Pennsylvania. Life and Times of the Most Rev. John Carroll. John G. Shea, New York, 1888.

[2] Church and State in Early Maryland. By George Petrie. J. H. U. Historical and Political Studies, Series IV.

of Rock Creek, he was born in Upper Marlboro, and when quite a youth went abroad to be educated and subsequently entered the Jesuit order.

Soon after the suppression of that order by the pope, the young priest returned to this country, arriving here in the summer of 1774. He went at once to his mother's home near Forest Glen, Maryland. Here he gathered a congregation, and soon a church building was erected at Forest Glen known as St. John's Church. Near the site of the original structure is the present church edifice of St. John, and in the nearby cemetery lie the remains of the bishop's mother.[1]

The missionary services of Rev. Mr. Carroll were at this time extended to the locality about Acquia Creek, where his two sisters lived. One had married William Brent, whose home was in Richland, Stafford County, Virginia, and a relative, Robert Brent, who lived at Acquia, was the husband of another sister.[2] St. John's Church was a frame building thirty feet square, and it remained standing as late as the year 1844.[3]

The first building of which there is authentic record, erected within the bounds of the District for Catholic worship, was built on a lot that was deeded in 1787 by John Threlkeld to Rev. John Carroll, the latter ten years later being created bishop. The site was on the north side of N Street, between 35th and 36th streets, and within a block of the ground that was about the same time acquired by the Jesuits for the location of what became Georgetown College. The building on N Street was begun in 1788 and completed in 1792, and was used

[1] The probable date of the erection of the first church building is 1775. "A room in the manor at Rock Creek was the first church. Soon the erection of St. John's Church was begun about half a mile from his residence. It was, from all we know, the first church under secular clergy established in Maryland, and the first after St. Peter's, Baltimore, raised by a congregation which supported a pastor." Biographical Sketch of the Most Rev. John Carroll. John Carroll Brent, Baltimore, 1843.

[2] The same.

[3] Life and Times of Bishop Carroll. U. S. Catholic Magazine, III, p. 365.

by the congregation of Trinity Parish, the first pastor of which was Rev. Francis O'Neal. Trinity parochial school now occupies the site of the building.

The first church building erected in Georgetown and the second within the present bounds of the District was located on the site now occupied by the edifice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Volta Place. It was then known as a Lutheran church. The lot was a donation from Charles Beatty and George Fraser Hawkins, as expressed in a deed dated May 17, 1770, placing on record their addition to Georgetown of 208 acres of "a part of a tract of land called Knaves Disappointment lying and being in Frederick County, in the province aforesaid and adjoining Georgetown, formerly the property of Mr. George Gordon, late of Frederick County, deceased." [1]

The Maryland act of Dec. 31, 1796, states that the streets and lots of this addition were originally laid out in 1769, and one of the purposes of the deed made in 1770 was to give legal effect to a disposition of the lots through a lottery. A church building of logs was at once erected, and services were held there, but irregularly, as the congregation was too feeble to support a permanent pastor. The building, which had about it a graveyard, fell into decay, and some forty years after its erection was in ruins. A second building was not erected until the year 1835.

Two lots in the town site of Hamburg were assigned by the proprietor, Jacob Funk, in the year 1768 "to the Dutch Germans in said town of Hamburg," but this gift was not utilized until the latter part of the early half of the nineteenth century, when the Concordia German Evangelical Church was organized, and succeeded, after considerable litigation, in making use of both lots for church purposes, selling one and erecting in 1833 on the other an edifice at the southeast corner

[1] Land Record W. folio 254, records of the county clerk's office of Frederick County, Md. The deed is given in full in the History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Georgetown. Luther Hess Waring [Washington, 1909], from which other facts of the history of the church are taken.

of 20th and G streets, N. W., where is still located the church home.[1]

The Baptist denomination did not begin to get a foothold in this section of the country until after the revolutionary war. As late as the year 1790 only one church of that denomination was found in Maryland, and that had a membership of thirty-two. It was located at Seneca in Montgomery County. At that period there were three Baptist churches in Fairfax County and five in Loudoun County, Va.[2]

Methodist preachers visited this section of the country as early as 1772, when Francis Asbury, the first bishop of the church in the United States, was among the preachers who found their way to Georgetown. But the society had no place of worship in that place until 1795, when a church edifice was erected in the middle of the block on the east side of 28th Street between N and Olive streets. Taking its new name from its present location, it is now known as the Dumbarton Avenue Church. There is a record also of the visits of early itinerants, both at Alexandria and at Bladensburg.[3]

While there are no official statistics of the population of the various places in and about the District prior to the first United States Census of 1790, still it is apparent there was a steady growth in the number of the inhabitants, which was especially

[1] These provisions for a German population in the vicinity of Georgetown shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century are curious, and undoubtedly point to an expectation of the direction of the tide of German settlement from the region of the upper Potomac to tidewater. Such expectations were not realized, as the tendency proved to be through the Shenandoah Valley rather than along the shores of the Potomac, although a number of German farmers settled in Loudoun County, Va., and in the lower part of Frederick County.

[2] Annual Register of the Baptist Denomination in North America. John Asplund, 1791.

[3] The year 1795 is only a probable date, as it is inferred that "the new chapel" in Georgetown mentioned by Bishop Asbury under date of Nov. 2, 1795, refers to a building on this site. The lot, which was No. 17 in Holmead's addition, was not deeded to the trustees of the church until April 17, 1800. Deed of Anthony Holmead to Lloyd Beall, Richard Parrott, Samuel Williams, Isaac Owens, Richard Beck, George Collard and Peter Miller, trustees. Lib. E. f. 238. Centennial Sketch of Methodism in Georgetown. Washington, 1884.

marked during the years succeeding the war of the revolution. Evidence of this is found in the establishment of churches. While the needs of the Catholics were supplied by the chapels attached to private houses and one such place of worship served a wide area, the building of Trinity Catholic Church in Georgetown shows the creation of a new centre.

Up to the year 1794, when Rev. Walter Dulaney Addison, who lived at Oxen Run, opposite Alexandria, began holding services in Georgetown, making use of the Presbyterian Church of that place in the afternoons, Rock Creek Church was evidently attended by the residents of Georgetown belonging to that denomination, as their names appear in the list of members of the early vestries. In 1789, when a lottery was devised for raising the sum of $1500 for the erection of a new building, the names of the following Georgetown citizens appeared in the list of managers: Colonel William Deakins, Robert Peter, Benjamin Stoddert, John Peter, Bernard O'Neil, John Threlkeld and Colonel George Beall, as did that of Anthony Holmead, who lived on the east side of Rock Creek. The drawing was announced to be held at John Suter's Tavern, Georgetown.[1]

Of that other institution, the school, that shared with the church in raising the standard of life, it did not receive in the states outside of New England the support from public taxation which in later years came to be such a marked feature of public polity in this country. Virginia had an admirable law in its intent which was framed by Thomas Jefferson in 1779 but not adopted by the legislature until 1796. Then the execution of the law was intrusted to the county courts and was not put into effective operation.

The purpose of this measure was to provide free schools in every hamlet or township where the elements of education should be taught. The Maryland act of 1696 provided a free school in each county to be supported by the export duties on furs and skins, while later legislation placed the support of the schools as a charge on the general tax fund. But the

[1] Times and Patowmack Packet, Nov. 25, 1789.

funds were inadequate, and the schools either sank into decay or else were closed.

The condition is illustrated by the course pursued in 1774, when the county schools of St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George counties were united and the one school became Charlotte Hall in St. Mary's County, Md. Such legislation was either in advance of public opinion or of the resources of the community. At any rate, money from public taxation was not provided for the schools, so that the colonial free school was free merely in the sense of teaching the liberal arts and was not the free school as the term was understood in later years in this country. They were the Latin schools or classical academy.[1]

Scanty and irregular provision was made for the education of the children of the poor by private subscription. General Washington is recorded as an annual subscriber of 50 pounds for the instruction of poor children in Alexandria. Private schools were the only means of securing elementary education in Maryland and Virginia except in the case of those opulent enough to pay for the services of a tutor. A glimpse of the situation is given in a sermon by Rev. Thomas Bacon, rector of St. Peter's Parish, Talbot County, Md., printed in London in 1751, in which he observes, "Education is hardly to be attained at any rate by the children of the poor."

William and Mary College was established in Williamsburg, Va., in 1693, and in 1782 Washington College was chartered at Charlestown, on the western shore of the Chesapeake, and three years later St. John's College came into existence at Annapolis. Clergymen commonly combined the duties of teaching with their ministerial work, and at the same time provided a welcome addition to their income. Some of these men rose to eminence in the community. Rev. Samuel Finlay, who in 1761 was chosen president of Princeton College, conducted a famous school at Nottingham, Cecil County, Va. Shortly before 1773 Rev. James Hunt, the Presbyterian minister at Bladens-

[1] The College of William and Mary. Herbert B. Adams, U. S. Bureau of Education, Contributions to American Educational History.

burg, opened a school at that place which he subsequently removed to his farm near Rockville. A picture of this school and its teacher has been given us in the fragment of autobiography left by William Wirt, famous as a lawyer and writer.

In the year 1797 the prize offered by the American Philosophical Society for the best essay on a system of education and also a plan for public schools was divided between Rev. Samuel Knox, a Presbyterian minister at Bladensburg, and Samuel H. Smith of Philadelphia. The latter three years later established the *National Intelligencer* in the city of Washington.

Rev. Stephen B. Balch conducted the Columbian Academy in Georgetown on the site of 3241 N Street. A graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, Scotland, Rev. Mr. Allen located in Georgetown about the year 1785, where he taught for years. He followed closely in the wake of the group of seven Scotch families that came to Georgetown about the year 1785 and built their homes on 33d Street, south of M Street, which in after years came to be known as Scotch Row.[1]

Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, the founder of St. John's, the first Episcopal church in Georgetown, set up a school at Oxen Run, while he was rector of Broad Creek Church.

Through the initiative of Rev. John Carroll action was taken as early as 1786 for the establishment of a college at Georgetown. At a meeting of the general chapter of the Jesuits in that year, it was decided to provide for the erection of such a school, and a sum of money was appropriated to be raised by the sale of land in Maryland belonging to the order.

In accordance with this action a tract of 115 acres on Deer Creek, Hartford County, was sold and applied to this purpose. On this tract a priest's house and a chapel had been built in 1747. From this source came almost all the funds used in starting the institution, although efforts were made to raise money in England where Rev. Mr. Carroll sent a circular dated March 30, 1787, inviting subscriptions. The progress

[1] Reminiscences of Georgetown, D.C. Rev. T. B. Balch, Washington, 1859.

made in the erection of the first building is noted in letters of Rev. Mr. Carroll, who wrote in 1788 that the erection of the college building had been started, and he hoped to see it covered that year. In 1791 he writes, "I trust Georgetown academy will be opened in a few months, Congress has decided to make that neighborhood and perhaps that town their seat." [1]

The direct tide of the war of the revolution did not reach the locality where the District of Columbia was subsequently fixed. One of the main highways between the north and the south at that time was from Philadelphia and Chester, along the east side of the Chesapeake, crossing the latter at Kent Island opposite Annapolis, and thence to a ferry on the Potomac, a few miles south of Alexandria. This route was followed mainly by the army as it went south to encounter the British in that locality.[2]

[1] Life and Times of the Most Rev. John Carroll. Also The Catholic Church in Colonial Days. John G. Shea. New York, 1886. Rev. Mr. Carroll was one of the clergymen on the board of St. John's College that organized that institution. In a letter written in 1790 and quoted in the "Life," he says, "A college has lately been opened at Annapolis, under the protection of our state legislature, and amply endowed by them. It is erected on principles of perfect equality as to religion. This matter was broached before we formed a plan for our academy at Georgetown. I see at present no other advantage to us Catholics in the Annapolis college than this, that it may be a place for our young lads who have perfected their grammar education at Georgetown to pursue higher studies of law, medicine, etc. In other respects it will be hurtful to our institution."

From the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Oct. 4, 1791.

*Notice of Georgetown Academy*

The academy lately erected at Georgetown, Potomac, will be opened before the end of this month (October) and admit scholars provided they have received some instruction in reading and writing, from which stage of education they will be conducted through the several branches of useful and classical learning, till they be fitted to proceed with advantage to the higher sciences in the university of this or those of the neighboring states.

[2] William Wirt, who was born in Bladensburg, records in his reminiscences as published in the Memories of the Life of William Wirt, John P. Kennedy, Phila., 1860, seeing the passing of Lee's legion through that village on its way to the south to support General Greene, and also that during the winter of 1779–1780, while he was attending

The effects of the war in the interruption of the ordinary pursuits of life as well as the positive drain upon the resources of the people were felt severely. For the citizens shared with their fellows throughout the state of Maryland in bearing the burdens of war in a commonwealth of which a recent writer has recorded that one tenth of the available military population remained constantly in the field, while each year the state contributed towards the expenses of the army about three tenths per cent of its entire taxable basis.[1]

Maryland troops, states another writer, stopped the British advance at the battle of Long Island and later won laurels in the south. The Maryland line, at first the independent companies of 1775, then the flying camp of 1776 and then the enlistment for three years under the above name, was the backbone of the army.[2]

The beginning of a form of government in the frontier advance into Kentucky when a Virginia county was organized by the settlers, and the advance of settlement down the Ohio, served to push farther into the wilderness the outposts of civilization, so that Fort Cumberland before the close of the struggle with England had lost much of its character as the extreme outlying point in the westward progress. The change due to the increase in the population and making the soil that had been waste productive, might be traced to some extent in the character of the products that came from the back country and in the growth of such places as Baltimore and Georgetown, which, after the war, had come to be rivals as the shipping port for the trade of the entire region of western Maryland and Virginia.

the classical academy of a Mr. Rogers in Georgetown, he recalls seeing a long line of wagons crossing the Potomac on the ice, and conjectures that they were attached to the troops he had seen in Bladensburg. He also adds that "the continued musters of militia in Bladensburg with the drum and fife made me a drummer for a period so early that I have no recollection of its commencement."

[1] State Government in Maryland, 1777–1781. Beverly W. Bond, Jr., J. H. U. Studies in History and Political Science, Series XIII.

[2] Maryland Proprietary, Province and State. Bernard C. Steiner, in Men of Mark in Maryland. Washington, 1907.

The expansion of the trade in flour resulted in making that product an important factor with tobacco in the markets as early as the year 1780. The progress made by Georgetown as a centre may be inferred from the notice published in the *Maryland Journal* of Feb. 26, 1783, that the inhabitants of Montgomery County intend petitioning the state assembly for the removal of the court house established at about the geographic centre of the county at Rockville to the extreme southern end at Georgetown.

As the port of a more extensive wheat-producing area, Alexandria had an advantage over Georgetown, while the superiority of Baltimore as a shipping port early gave it the lead in the struggle for the trade of the interior country, in spite of the shorter land carriage to the Potomac towns. But with the Potomac made navigable, the situation would be changed in favor of the Potomac towns, and it was not until the closing year of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth had passed that it was realized, not only that adequate means could not be secured to do what was planned, but that the improvement scheme itself was totally defective and even impracticable.

In Alexandria was located the office of the *Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser*, a weekly started, as far as can be ascertained from the few issues that have been preserved, at the opening of the year 1784. In the same way the conclusion is reached that with the year 1788 the paper was issued twice a week.[1] It was the first newspaper published within the territory included in the bounds of the District, six years before Georgetown had a newspaper, and ten years after Baltimore's first newspaper. It may be presumed its career ended in less than five years, as in the summer of 1789 another paper with practically the same name appeared, the *Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser*.

The publication of a weekly newspaper, the first attempt of

[1] Vol. 4, No. 187, Aug. 30, 1787, has the colophon, "George Richards and Co. at their printing office on Fairfax St." This issue, as well as those for March 28 and May 29, 1788, are in the Library of Congress.

the sort in Georgetown, was begun about the middle of February, 1789, before the question of a permanent seat had been taken up by the first congress. It was the *Times and Potowmack Packet*, Charles Fierer and Thomas N. Fosdick, printers. It occupied the field over two years. The issue of July 6, 1791, is the latest that has been preserved.[1]

In March, 1790, a second newspaper, the *Georgetown Weekly Ledger*, appeared, Day and Hancock, printers, who were later on succeeded by Alexander Doyle. The latest number of this paper known is of the date Oct. 5, 1793.[2]

It is probable, as the *Ledger* was published while the *Packet* was in existence, thus attempting to gain a share of the patronage of a community hardly large enough, it might be surmised, to afford support for one newspaper, that it was the first in the long list of publications that were started in the District, primarily because it was the seat of government. On this supposition the proprietor showed great confidence in his ability to forecast the action of congress, as he started his venture some three months prior to the residence bill becoming a law.[3]

[1] In the issue of this paper of Nov. 25, 1789, is the announcement "Just Published. Sold at this office wholesale and retail, Poor Robin Almanack or the Maryland Ephemeris. For the year of our Lord, 1790."

This reads as if the book was printed by the Georgetown printers, and, if that was the case, it is the earliest product of the District press of which there is any record. There is, however, no known copy of the almanac in existence, so that its exact imprint cannot be determined.

[2] New Jersey Archives. 1st Series, Vol. XI, edited by William Nelson. Some Account of American Newspapers. Information relative to other early newspapers in Maryland was derived from this excellent source.

[3] From the office of the *Ledger* came the earliest District imprint known. It is a pamphlet entitled "Two Sermons on the certain and final perseverance of the Saints," by Stephen Bloomer Balch, A. M., Pastor of the Presbyterian congregation, Georgetown.

Georgetown printed for the author by M. Day and W. Hancock, 1791.

It is probable that the second District imprint as well as the third came from the same press. The titles are as follows: —

"The Potomak Almanac or the Washington Ephemeris for the year of our Lord, 1793." Georgetown (Potomak). Printed and sold by James Doyle [1792].

There are no known District imprints from the year 1792 until the year 1800.[1] While a weekly paper served the needs of the citizens of Georgetown, the publishers of the *Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette,* John Smith and Ellis Price, printers, which appeared Nov. 21, 1792, felt justified in providing two issues a week. It is probable the weekly appearance of the *Virginia Gazette* had ceased by that time.

Newspapers were not as numerous in Virginia and Maryland as they were in the middle and eastern states. The earliest newspaper published in Maryland was the *Maryland Gazette* that appeared in 1727 at Annapolis, William Parks, publisher. The latter was the public printer both for Maryland and Virginia, and had a press at Annapolis and also at Williamsburg. Some six years later he gave up his office at Annapolis and began the publication at Williamsburg of the *Virginia Gazette,* the first newspaper of that colony.

The famous press of Jonas Green was set up in Annapolis in the year 1745, and his paper bearing the name *Maryland Gazette* began its long career. The name of William Rind in the year 1765 appeared in connection with Jonas Green as publisher, and about the year 1766 Rind began the publication of the *Virginia Gazette* at Williamsburg as a rival to the existing newspaper of the same name that was thought to incline in its sympathies towards the side of England in the struggle then going on over the stamp tax. On the death of Mr. Rind the publication of the paper was continued by his widow and then by their sons William and John Rind.

As early as the year 1773 a newspaper was published in Baltimore, called the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser,* William Goddard, publisher. In the year 1793 it was issued

"Pious Guide to prayer and devotion, containing various practices calculated to answer the various demands of the different devout members of the Roman Catholic Church." George-Town (Potowmack). Printed by James Doyle, 1792.

[1] An account of the issues of the District of Columbia press in 1800–1802 is given by A. P. C. Griffin. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. IV.

three times a week, and two years later it was consolidated with the *Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, and the publication continued to 1797. *Dunlop's Maryland Gazette* or the *Baltimore General Advertiser*, John Dunlop, printer, a weekly paper, was started in 1775 and discontinued in 1779. The name was revived in the year 1783 in a weekly published by John Hays, which became a semiweekly three years later, and its publication continued as late as the year 1791.

The *Maryland Chronicle*, Matthias Bartgis, printer, was issued weekly at Frederick, Md., as early as 1786 and had an existence of some thirty-five years. A *Maryland Gazette*, John Winter, printer, began its career also in Frederick in the year 1790. The town of Elizabeth Town or Hagerstown had in the year 1794, 2000 inhabitants, and four years earlier there was begun the publication of the *Washington Spy*, Stewart Herbert, printer, which continued until 1797.

The development of the back country, as the region about Frederick and Hagerstown was called in the earlier days, is emphasized by the record of the newspapers, and also there may be traced in the same record, at least to some extent, the rise in commercial importance of Baltimore, Alexandria and Georgetown.

When a system for the collection of the duties on imports and exports was provided by the act of July 31, 1789, Georgetown was made a port of entry for all the region on the east side of the Potomac from Pamumkey Creek to the head of navigable waters, while Alexandria was the port on the west side of the river. James McCubbin Lingan was appointed collector of the port of Georgetown on the first of October, 1790. At that time William B. Magruder was in charge of the post-office, which had been established since 1776.[1]

[1] The total value of the exports of the two places for the years named are given as follows: —

| | 1791 | 1792 | 1793 | 1794 | 1795 | 1796 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Georgetown, | $314,864 | $348,539 | $364,537 | $128,924 | $196,790 | $159,868 |
| Alexandria, | 381,242 | 535,592 | 812,889 | | 948,460 | 1,100,000 |

The figures are taken from Travels through the United States in the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797, by the Duke de La Rochefoucault Lian-

Georgetown was described by Thomas Johnson of Frederick, Md., in a letter to Washington, Nov. 10, 1791, as "the best market for tobacco in the state, perhaps in America." [1]

A contemporary account of the commercial condition of the locality is found in a letter of Benjamin Stoddert, a merchant of Georgetown and a large owner of property in that place and in Washington, written to John Templeman, also a resident of Georgetown and associated with Mr. Stoddert in some of his land enterprises. The letter is undated, but the context shows that it was written in the latter portion of the year 1804. It was addressed to Mr. Templeman, then at Boston, and from statements made in it, the inference may be drawn that one object in writing was to supply Mr. Templeman with material for presenting to prospective investors the advantages of Georgetown and its immediate locality and the bright promise of its future growth and prosperity, and consequently the enhancement in property values.

Mr. Stoddert was born in Bladensburg, Md., and after serving in the war of the revolution and reaching the rank of major retired to take a civil appointment in connection with the war office. He was the first secretary of the navy, serving from 1798 until 1802. He was the second president of the first bank started in the District of Columbia, the Bank of Columbia in Georgetown, and became deeply interested in property in the new city where he was a landowner before the site of the District was chosen.

In common with practically all the early speculators in Washington city property, he became heavily involved, and the crisis in his affairs had apparently been reached about the time of the date of this letter, for towards the end he informs Mr.

court, London, 1799, Vol. II, pp. 332 and 339. The author attributes the decrease in the Georgetown exports to the falling off in the cultivation of tobacco and also to the diversion of the capital of the merchants to speculation in the lots of the federal city. In 1790 the exports of Baltimore were valued at over ten millions of dollars.

[1] The Maryland legislature by an act of Dec. 21, 1790, in view of the increase in the tobacco trade at Georgetown, authorized the establishment of a third inspection house. The fees at $1 per hogshead, it was estimated, would amount to $10,000 a year.

Templeman that his "peace of mind" depends on the success of his efforts. Because of this strong personal interest, he may not be regarded as an unprejudiced witness, but, making due allowance for such a natural bias, his account of the commercial situation of the locality is valuable and by far the most comprehensive from any contemporary pen.

The letter as it is preserved in the manuscript division of the library of congress is not complete and begins abruptly, and in part is as follows: —

"Brought up a merchant, the revolutionary war commenced just as my apprenticeship ended and I entered into the army — in two or three years was made secretary to the board of war, but, before the end of the war, returned to Maryland to marry, looking to commerce as the means by which I was to support a family, and determined to enter into commerce as soon as the war ended, and not before. After marrying, I had two years to consider where to fix myself in commerce, all places being alike to me, having no particular interest in any.

"Baltimore was then a flourishing place almost beyond calculation, and Alexandria was a place of very considerable commerce. I was urged by my friends to fix myself in each of these places, but I had reasoned myself into a decided preference for Georgetown, then (at the end of 1783) entirely destitute of every appearance of being commercial. There was but one trifling retail shop in it, and it had not a man who ventured five pounds on any foreign voyage. Still, I said that no place in this quarter of the union, not Baltimore itself, was convenient to so great a proportion of the products of the country as Georgetown, and in a state of peace I knew that the commerce of such a place must depend in a great degree on the products of the country, it was from situation entitled to receive, and that if this position was correct, which I could not doubt, that the trade of Baltimore and of Alexandria would decline and that of Georgetown would increase beyond the conception of common minds.

"I was not deceived in these calculations. The merchants of Baltimore experienced a diminution of their trade, for which

they were unable to account. Alexandria, not having enjoyed so much, — more than its natural resources entitled it to, — suffered less in the peace, though its trade did decline, while that of Georgetown, which only had a commencement in 1784, flourished more than even the most sanguine would have imagined.

"The exports of Georgetown, in two years after the peace [with England in 1783], exceeded those of Alexandria, and in six years were more than double — and in six years they amounted to more than half those of Baltimore. Had the peace continued six years more, the exports of Georgetown would have exceeded those of Baltimore, because in peace our exports consist principally of our own produce, and Georgetown is really more convenient than Baltimore to the greatest quantity of grain, flour, and tobacco made in Maryland and Virginia.

"The European war put an end to the trade of Georgetown, injured that of Alexandria, and raised that of Baltimore beyond the clouds. There was nothing in all this, not easily foreseen. Baltimore had capital and great number of merchants; Alexandria, an old place compared to Georgetown, had much more commercial capital, and a greater number of merchants. The effect of a war, which produced an unnatural state of trade, is to destroy places, but beginning and to benefit those already established and possessing merchants, capital and ships.

" . . . Then further all the trade now carried on by Baltimore consists entirely of what is properly called the carrying trade, importing into Baltimore the articles from one foreign country to export them to another. What better proof can be given of this than a comparison of the amount of articles of our own growth with the articles of foreign growth shipped from Baltimore in each year since the prevalence of the European war.

" . . . During the revolutionary war Baltimore exported the whole tobacco of Maryland, during the peace that succeeded Baltimore did not export one fourth of the tobacco of Maryland. In three years after the war ended, Georgetown exported one third of the Maryland tobacco and in six years much more

than one half. During the present war Baltimore has again engrossed the exportation of by far the greater part of the tobacco of Maryland. So of flour.

"Baltimore is situated to receive a greater proportion of the flour of Maryland than of tobacco, perhaps Baltimore is equally convenient as Georgetown to one half of the flour of Maryland, and Georgetown is so situated to receive from Virginia in preference to other places quantities of flour, equal to the whole quantity made in Maryland, so that in truth Georgetown is selected to be a much greater exporter of flour as well as of tobacco than Baltimore.

". . . all these observations would apply with nearly equal force to Alexandria was Georgetown out of the way and there was no ship channel above Alexandria. As things are, Alexandria will, as it did before, decline as Georgetown rises."

Benjamin Stoddert was not the only man that the commercial prospects of Georgetown drew to that place after the close of the war with England![1]

The principal merchant of the place was Robert Peter, who came from Scotland, where he was born in the year 1726, and opened a store in Georgetown about the year 1752. The English firm of John Glassford & Co., which Mr. Peter represented, rented a storehouse on Water Street, west of Wisconsin Avenue. Mr. Peter was appointed in 1757 to fill a vacancy in the board of commissioners in charge of the sale of lots of the town, and held that position nearly up to the time when the city was incorporated. He was then chosen mayor.

Uriah Forrest of St. Mary's County, Md., who rendered distinguished service in the war, at the close of that contest went to London, where he established the firm of Forrest, Stoddert and Murdock, and engaged extensively in the trade of the Potomac. He was successful in business, and with the money he had made, he returned to this country after the location of

[1] It is interesting to note that his residence at the southwest corner of 34th and Prospect streets is still standing, although changed in its exterior form. It is one of the largest private houses of this locality, built in the period of spacious homes.

the federal capital had been determined, and taking up his residence in Georgetown engaged in business.

Like many of his associates in Georgetown, he became interested in property in the new city and shared the fate of a number of such adventurers in meeting heavy losses. He became the clerk of the circuit court of the District when it was established in 1801. His country seat of Rosedale at the northeast corner of Newark and 36th streets is still in the possession of his descendants. A portion of it became the property of Grover Cleveland while he was President, and he lived here during the summer season.

Another officer who rendered valued service during the war was Charles Beatty of Frederick County. He also removed to Georgetown and engaged in business.

Thomas Corcoran from Ireland in the year 1788 passed through Georgetown on his way to Richmond, where he intended to engage in business. But attracted by the opportunities offered in Georgetown he decided to remain there. In later years he was honored by his fellow-citizens in being elected to the office of mayor. He was the father of W. W. Corcoran, prominent for so many years as a citizen of Washington.[1]

The son of George Beall, the owner of a portion of the original part of Georgetown, who bore his father's name, married a member of the Magruder family. His son Thomas Brooke Beall was president of the Farmers and Mechanics' Bank. He made one of the additions of land to Georgetown. George Beall's residence, which he built in 1784, was located on the heights of Georgetown and was called Dumbarton. He married Ann Orme, the latter family being from England, and it is probably a member of the same family whose survey east of Rock Creek was used by General Washington while he was engaged in studying the locality in order to determine the site of the new city.

John Laird, who came from Scotland and was engaged in business in Bladensburg, removed to Georgetown in the year

[1] Old Georgetown. Taggart, p. 194.

1800. His eldest daughter married James Dunlop, judge of the circuit court of the District. The father of the latter came from Glasgow.[1]

The high bluff on the river side of the town along which M Street now passes was in the early days a favorite location for the residences of the well-to-do, where they built spacious houses with the grounds extending down to the river and commanding a fine view of that interesting waterway. Here were to be found the homes of Benjamin Stoddert, General John Mason and in the opening years of the nineteenth century of Francis Scott Key, the author of the Star Spangled Banner. The latter house, on the south side of M Street, just east of the entrance to the aqueduct bridge, was torn down in the year 1912.[2]

The character of this locality at an early date is shown by an advertisement that appeared in *The Times and Patowmack Packet*, April 23, 1789, in which Valentine Reintzel, Jr., a member of the common council of the town in 1791, offered for sale or rent the two-story brick house where he then lived, which he described as being "in the most pleasant part of the town near the market house." The latter building stood on the site occupied by the structure now in use as a market on the south side of M Street, just west of Wisconsin Avenue.

The year Georgetown became an incorporated town is the date of the organization of Lodge No. 9 of Masons. In the spring of 1789 the Grand Lodge of Maryland granted a petition from a number of Masons in Georgetown asking for authority to convene as a regular lodge. This petition was granted.

There is a tradition that a lodge existed in the town at an early period and worked under a charter granted by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, as it was a common practice prior to the revolution for lodges of Masons to organize in this country under authority from the Grand Lodge of Scotland or that of England. Owing to the large number of residents in George-

[1] Reminiscences of Georgetown, D.C. Rev. T. B. Balch, Washington, 1859.

[2] Mr. Key succeeded to the law business of his uncle, Philip Barton Key. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 23, 1805.

town from Scotland, it is conjectured that this early lodge, of which the records have not been preserved, went back to Scotland rather than to England for its charter.[1]

The Georgetown Masons promptly availed themselves of the charter of the Maryland Grand Lodge, as notices of meetings of Lodge No. 9, Ancient York Masons, are found in the newspapers as early as November of that year.[2]

The first observance of St. John's Day in Georgetown of which a record has been preserved is reported in the *Times and Patowmack Packet* of June 30, 1790. A procession to the church was a feature of the day "where an excellent discourse was delivered by Rev. Brother Balch, after which they proceeded to Mr. John Suter's, where they celebrated the day according to the ancient form and custom."

A lodge of Masons was formed in Alexandria in 1783 under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. Five years later a grand lodge was organized in Virginia and the Alexandria organization came under its jurisdiction. General Washington served as master of the lodge in 1788 and that event is preserved in the change in its name to Alexandria Washington Lodge, which it still bears.[3]

In the same issue of the *Packet* the announcement appears that "the gentlemen who subscribed to celebrate the anniversary of American Independence will be pleased to attend at Mr. White's tavern at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon to choose managers to regulate the proceedings of the day."

It is likely this was not the first 4th of July observance in

[1] An inscription in a Bible, published in Edinburgh in 1754, owned by Potomac Lodge, the successor of Lodge No. 9, is as follows: "A present from M. Colin Campbell to St. Andrew's Lodge, the 30th of January, 1773, Bladensburg." This is all the record preserved of the existence of the Bladensburg Lodge. History of Potomac Lodge, Chronicles of Georgetown, Richard P. Jackson, Washington, 1878, p. 271.

[2] *Times and Patowmack Packet*, Nov. 25, 1789. History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, p. 14. Kenton N. Harper, Washington, 1911.

[3] History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, p. 11.

the District, but it is the earliest of which any record has been preserved. The usual form of celebration was a dinner, when a long list of toasts was the feature.

In the issue of *The Packet* of July 21, 1790, it is stated "last evening the Theatre of this town was opened by Mr. McGrath's Co. of comedians with the celebrated comedy The Miser, which was acted with great applause before a crowded assembly. It is hoped that this company, by far the best which ever visited this town, will meet with encouragement." Evidently this was not the opening of the theatre in the sense of the starting of a new enterprise, but merely the beginning of a new season. When the first theatrical performance was given is not known.

The series of receptions and the popular ovation accorded General Washington when he made the journey from Mount Vernon to New York in April, 1789, where he went to take the oath of office as the first President of the new republic, began at Alexandria, where he was received "by a respectable corps of gentlemen," and where he was presented with an address from the mayor, Dennis Ramsay, to which a response was made. The Alexandria escort conducted the illustrious citizen to the Virginia side of the ferry. Washington and his suite, which included Charles Tompson, the secretary of the old congress, was received on the Georgetown side with "the acclamations of a large crowd of their grateful fellow citizens, who beheld their Fabius in the evening of his days bid adieu to the peaceful retreat of Mount Vernon in order to save his country once more from confusion and anarchy." From Georgetown he had the escort of a "corps of gentlemen" commanded by Colonel William Deakins, Jr., as far as Spurrier's Tavern, where they were met by an escort from Baltimore.[1]

[1] *Times and Patowmack Packet*, April 23, 1789. Spurrier's Tavern was on the post road about midway between Washington and Baltimore.

General Washington, spoken of as being "in the evening of his days," was then fifty-seven years old.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LOCATION OF THE DISTRICT

UNDER date of July 12, 1790, President Washington makes the following entry in his diary: "and about noon had two bills presented to me by the joint committee of Congress. The one, an act for establishing the temporary and permanent seat of the Government of the United States." [1]

The above is the first recorded utterance of General Washington in regard to the federal seat. While during the previous seven years he had doubtless not been unconcerned in regard to the fate of a measure of such importance, yet there is no evidence to show that he had participated in the contest that had been waged with such vigor. It may be inferred that he used his influence, and presumably in favor of the Potomac site, both because of his lifelong acquaintance with the locality and on the broader ground because he firmly believed that the Potomac River was to be one of the great ways of commerce and intercourse between the east and the great expanse of the western country, with its wonderful possibilities and promise. But he took no recorded part in the partisan and sectional struggle.

When it had ended, however, with the passage of the law of July 16, 1790, he began the exercise of the large powers intrusted to him, and from that time to the close of his administration he was the most potent force in the great work of establishing the capital city of the new republic. In addition to administrative ability of a high order required to create a city of national proportions that would be adapted for the needs of a nation then young and feeble and few in numbers, but destined to become one of the great powers of the earth, it was needed also that the guiding mind should have patriotic purpose and a lofty faith.

[1] Diary of George Washington, 1789–1791. Edited by Benson J. Lossing. New York, 1860.

This former quality his countrymen had recognized, and of the latter the city which he planned and fostered through the early years of a discouraging beginning stands forth to-day as a fine expression.

It was a city of no mean nation that Washington had in mind from the very outset, and this idea finds expression when he was resisting the attempts of some of the landowners to restrict the area to be selected. Under date of May 7, 1791, he writes to the commissioners of the city "that Philadelphia stood upon an area of three by two miles, and if the metropolis of one state occupied so much ground what ought that of the United States to occupy?" [1]

In carrying out an undertaking that was new in the history of nations — the creation of a centre for the home of a government, the only exception being that of St. Petersburg, which was the offspring of the will of the ruler of an autocracy — Washington had to encounter obstacles due to personal and local greed, the jealousy and distrust of strong sectional feeling and the ambition of other centres and localities where it was desired that the advantages of proximity to the national city be enjoyed. As has been pointed out, the divergent, discordant interests had been brought near enough by a compromise to make possible the choice of the Potomac site. But they were by no means reconciled to the result, and many years were to elapse before the blighting influence upon the capital city was effaced of uncertainty as to whether after all the District of Columbia was to retain the seat of government. The state of feeling in New York City, then the largest in point of population and the principal business centre of the new republic, was no doubt

[1] Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI. L. of C. The area decided upon by Washington was more than four and one half miles by three and one half miles. Also a letter to L'Enfant of April 4, 1791, advising a liberal area of land for the city plan he was then making, "Although it may not be immediately wanting," he adds, "it will, nevertheless, increase the revenue and of course be beneficial not only to the public but to the individuals also, hereafter inasmuch as the plan will be enlarged and thereby freed from those blotches which otherwise might result from not comprehending all the lands that appear well adapted to the general design."

voiced by the editor of the *New York Daily Gazette*, who in concluding in the issue of Aug. 11, 1790, a sketch of the proceedings of the last session of congress in that city said, "We wish we could with equal propriety vindicate the measure of removal without a cause and in so abrupt a manner."

Jefferson wrote in November, 1790, that in conversations he had had with men interested in the Potomac site "they were properly impressed with the idea that if the present measure of securing the federal seat on the Patowmack should be lost, it could never more be regained, that it would be dangerous to rely on any aids from congress or the assemblies of Virginia or Maryland and that measures should be adopted to carry the residence bill into execution without recourse to those bodies." [1]

Congress bade farewell to New York on Aug. 12, 1790, when it adjourned to meet in Philadelphia the following December for the third session of the first congress. Four days after adjournment, President Washington left New York on a tour through Rhode Island and the eastern states and did not reach Mount Vernon until about the 11th day of September. During this period there is no record that he took any steps towards executing the law authorizing him to locate the federal town somewhere on the east side of the Potomac between the Eastern Branch and the Conococheague, a stretch of some sixty-seven miles as the bird flies.

While the president was silent there were not lacking voices showing that, at least in the vicinity of the locality named, the subject was not lost sight of in the throng of absorbing interests which at that period were engrossing the attention of a people that were eagerly engaged in subduing a new country to the uses of civilized man. Under the heading of "General Remarks" the author of a communication in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* of Sept. 24, 1790, discussing the debate in congress on the residence bill, observed that while Baltimore is the proper place for the temporary seat, it would not have been suitable for the permanent seat, for the reason that it is too

[1] Mr. Jefferson's notes as to the proceedings to be had under the residence act. Jefferson papers. Also State Department, D.C., Papers.

remote from the western settlements, and besides would be too much exposed to an enemy from the water.

"By moving farther up the Potomac," he continues, "that thoroughfare to the western region, the situation will be more healthy, it will add to the cultivation of an extensive, fertile and populous country, and it will be more accommodated to our fellow-citizens west of the mountains and more so to almost one half of Pennsylvania, than if the seat of government was at Philadelphia. . . . Mr. Burke [a member of the house from South Carolina] is requested to attend to a sketch of the country which he designated a wilderness.

"Within four or five miles of Conegocheague is Hagers-Town, with twelve or eighteen stores and some manufactures: within ten miles down the river is Shepherds-Town [Va.] and Sharpsburg [Md.] with as many stores: within twelve miles farther southwest is Martinsburg with ten stores in it: within twenty-four miles northeast is Chambers-Town, the capital of Franklin County: within thirty-four miles southwest is Winchester, in which is sold about 80,000 pounds sterling worth of goods annually.

"Within fourteen miles of Conegocheague there are upwards of thirty pair of bur mill stones employed in manufacturing wheat: within the same distance there are four furnaces and three forges for making iron."[1]

Just four months after the residence bill became a law, President Washington publicly entered upon its execution, and as a preliminary step he went over the territory wherein he was authorized to make a selection of a suitable site. On the 15th of October, 1790, he came to Georgetown from Mount Vernon, and in the language of the only chronicler of that event, the editor of the *Times and Patowmack Packet* in the issue of Oct. 20, "with the principal citizens of this town and neighborhood [on Saturday, Oct. 16th] set out to view the country adjacent

[1] Washington County, of which Hagerstown was the county seat, was described in Jedediah Morse's American Gazetteer of 1790 as the garden of Maryland, and includes, "the rich, fertile and well-cultivated valley of Conegocheague." — The accepted spelling is Conococheague.

to the river Patowmack in order to fix on a proper selection for the Grand Columbian Federal City."

The president spent the day in travelling over what was to be the site of the new city, and in the evening returned to Georgetown. "On Sunday morning early," continues the chronicler, "he set out for the Great Falls and the Conocho-cheague. We are informed that since the arrival of the president in our parts, bets respecting the selection of Georgetown run high in favor of Georgetown. By the return of the president, we hope to have it in our power to lay a circumstantial account of this important matter before the public."

This latter hope was not realized, for no announcement was made of Washington's decision until the proclamation was issued the following January.

While in Georgetown, or perhaps just before he reached that place, Washington received an offer in writing, dated Oct. 13, 1790, from a number of property holders to sell on such terms as the president may determine to be reasonable, any of the lands owned by them in the vicinity of Georgetown. Those joining in this offer were Robert Peter, Thomas Beall of George, Benjamin Stoddert, Uriah Forrest, Will Deakins, Jr., John Stoddard, J. M. Lingan, George Beall and Anthony Holmead. In the rather elaborate statement setting forth the advantages of the vicinity of Georgetown, which accompanied this offer, it is pointed out "that if the Federal City should be erected on navigation, no place in the small distance from the mouth of the Eastern Branch to the highest tide-water, offers so many advantages . . . and it is conceived that the hilliness of the country, far from being an objection, will be thought a desirable circumstance, as it will at once contribute to the beauty, health and security of a city intended for the seat of Empire. For a place merely commercial, where men willingly sacrifice health to gain, a continued flat might perhaps be preferred." [1]

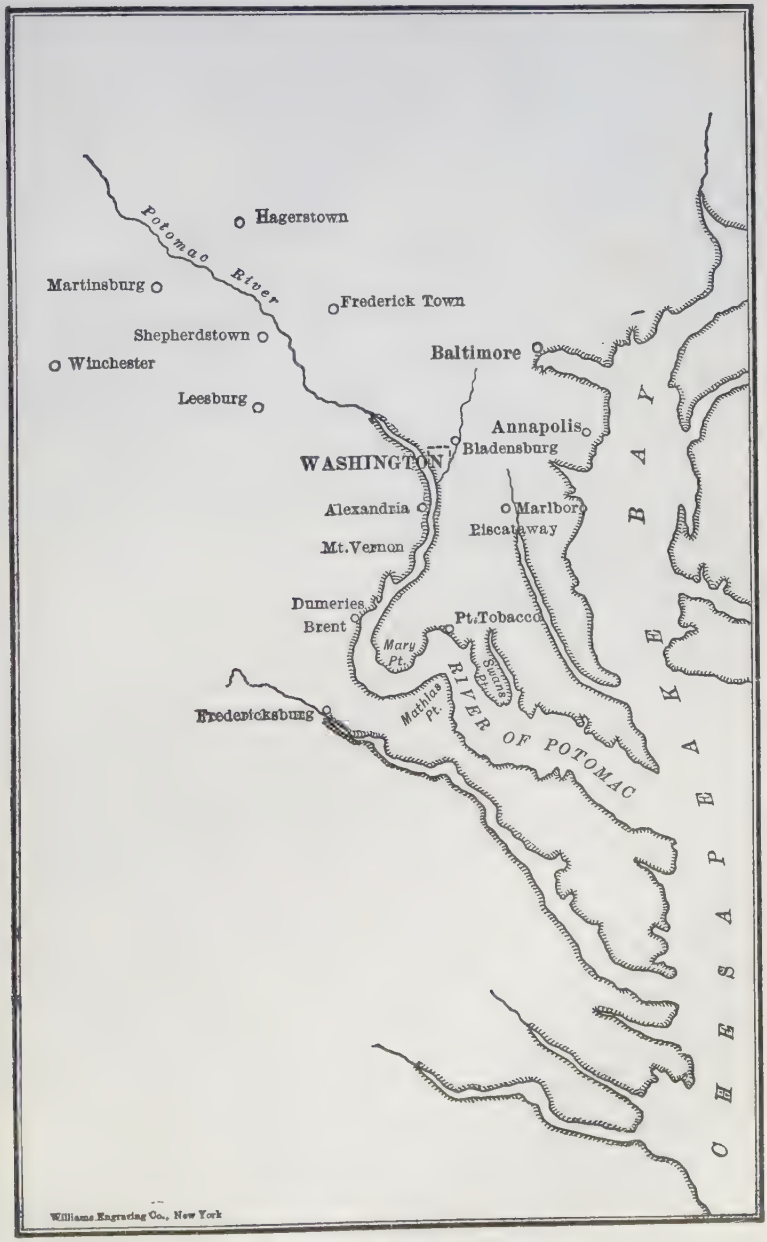
[1] Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2159. From War Department manuscripts. As an early expression of the view that the new city was to be regarded not merely from a utilitarian or commercial standpoint the above is interesting.

It was the vicinity of Georgetown, the site eventually selected, that these property owners, who were also for the most part residents of that place, proposed for the location of the new city, and not Georgetown itself. They pointed out the advantage in the case it became necessary to sell any part of the land to provide the money for the public buildings, of proximity to "a town already in possession of no very inconsiderable and increasing trade." The jealousy of the Eastern Branch locality, which influenced later on other property holders in the western portion of the new city, was not entertained by the petitioners, for they pointed out that as Georgetown was not a good winter harbor, the Eastern Branch afforded a safe anchorage, and, as was added, "whenever the vessels could sail from the Eastern Branch they could load at Georgetown."

There is no further contemporary record of the president's journey after he left Georgetown until his arrival in Hagerstown. How he travelled and the route followed can only be conjectured. It may be inferred that it was at this time that he viewed the lands about the Monocacy, forty miles from Georgetown.[1] When the president reached Elizabeth (Hagers) Town, he had travelled a distance of some seventy miles.

The distance between the two streams of water marking the designated limits of the territory of selection as the crow flies is about sixty-seven miles. By the usual highway route of to-day via Rockville, Frederick and Hagerstown, the distance is seventy-eight miles. It may be inferred that as there was no mention of Washington's visiting Frederick at this time, although it is likely such an event would have been chronicled, as the *Maryland Gazette and Frederick Weekly Advertiser* had begun its career, his route followed the river. What was known as the Lower or River Road is believed to have been older than the Frederick or Upper Road, as the section of the Rockville Road within the District was then known, and which ran some distance to the east of the River Road. As the law specified that the ten-mile square be located "on the River

[1] Francis Deakins to Washington, Nov. 12, 1790. State Department, D.C., Papers.




THE VICINITY OF WASHINGTON.

Potomac" somewhere between the two streams named, a visit of observation of the region necessarily included that in the immediate vicinity of the river.[1] He was received three miles from Hagerstown by the principal men of the place with an escort of a company of light horse. At the outskirts of the town a company of militia joined the escort. With the ringing of bells and "the welcome applause of the gratified inhabitants, the illustrious stranger," as the newspaper of the town, the *Washington Spy*, of Oct. 21 termed him, "was conducted through the main street" to Mr. Beltzhoover's tavern. "In the evening," the account continues, "the town was illuminated, bonfires appeared in all quarters and every demonstration of joy was exhibited on the happy occasion."

A supper was served at the tavern, followed by the offering of toasts. Among these was one by the president, "The River Patowmac, May the residence law be perpetuated and Patowmac view the Federal City."

This toast is significant as being the first of a number of recorded utterances of Washington of like import, especially during the first few years of city building. Washington seemed to be more concerned about the adverse, almost hostile, sentiment against the Potomac site than about all the other difficulties, financial and otherwise, which hung about the heels of the enterprise or at times appeared fairly to block the way.

At seven o'clock the next morning (October 21) the president resumed his journey after receiving an address from the citizens in which the wish was expressed to "have the honor to be

[1] In June of the following year, Washington stopped at Georgetown on his way from Mount Vernon to Philadelphia. He states in his diary under date of June 30, 1791, that being "desirous of seeing the nature of the country north of Georgetown and along the Upper Road, I resolved to pass through Frederick town in Maryland." Toner's Copy, Vol. 35. It is quite evident if he had taken "the Upper Road" in the fall of 1790, he would not have been desirous a few months later to make himself familiar with the country through which it passed. Washington, in his record of this trip over the Frederick road, states he breakfasted "at a small village called Williamsburg in which stands the court house of Montgomery County, fourteen miles from Georgetown," thus preserving the first name of Rockville.

included within your more especial command and jurisdiction — within the grand centre of virtues." The president in his reply made no reference to the purpose of his journey, nor gave any indication of conclusions he may have reached as to the precise locality of the territory he was to select.

"He set out," the same account records, "for Williams-Port in order to take passage down that noble river (the American Thames) which will be proud to waft him home." [1]

When Washington reached Williamsport, seven miles to the southwest of Hagerstown, he had come to the northern limit of the area of choice, for that town is located on the Potomac where the Conococheague flows into it, and he had therefore traversed the entire region specified in the residence law. It is evident that his coming aroused the people of Washington County, Md., to the possibilities of the situation, for a week later a petition signed by the citizens and addressed to the Maryland assembly was prepared, representing "that the law of Congress respecting a district for the permanent residence presents us with an occasion to hope that the said district may be located in this county, and as we are willing to make every contribution towards the necessary accommodation of Congress, that can reasonably be expected or that our circumstances can afford, we pray that the general assembly be pleased to pass an act, agreeably to the aforesaid law of Congress and the constitution of the United States to appropriate a district of ten mile square within this county wherein it may please the President to make the location." [2]

The petitioners ignored the fact there was then a law on the statute books of Maryland, passed Dec. 23, 1788, which agreed to do this very thing any where within the state. But, on the other hand, Maryland had not as yet enacted the necessary

[1] *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Oct. 29, 1790. From the *Washington Spy*, Elizabeth-Town, Oct. 21. The same account appeared in the *Gazette of the United States*, Philadelphia, Nov. 3, 1790, but in addition there is appended the address and the president's reply.

[2] The same, Nov. 12, 1790, date line of article, Elizabeth-Town, Maryland, Oct. 28.

coöperative legislation stipulated in the cession law of Virginia by which it was to make an appropriation of two thirds of the amount to be paid by Virginia towards the expense of defraying the cost of the public buildings. In fact, such a law was not passed until the following month.

A lively interest was displayed by the Virginians on the opposite side of the river. A news paragraph under the date line Shepherds-Town [Virginia], Nov. 5, published in the *Gazette of the United States*, Philadelphia, Nov. 27, 1790, states:—

"The late visit of our illustrious president encourages a hope that the permanent seat of the federal government will be fixed opposite to this town on the Maryland shore and one half of the ten mile square will be located in Virginia.

"This event will, however, depend much on donations from the inhabitants to defray the expenses of the federal buildings, especially as the president has informed us large offers have been made at other places on the Potomac.

"When we take into view the amazing advantages held up to the owners of land in this valley, the very sudden and unexpected increase in its value, we flatter ourselves that generous subscriptions will be offered, especially as only a small part will be shortly wanted. Our friends in Maryland are making every possible exertion to effect this important purpose, and as the inhabitants in the Virginia part of the valley will be equally benefited, they request our cordial concurrence and aid.

"Subscriptions are taken in Shepherd's-Town by Colonel John Morrow, John Keafley, Esq., Captain Charles Morrow, and Abraham Shepherd, Esq. In Martinsburg by Mr. Joseph Riddel. In Charlestown by Mr. William Cooke and Mr. John Henderson. On Shenandoah River by Mr. Humphrey Keys. In Bulskin settlement by Mr. John Marks.

"Very liberal subscriptions have, within a few days past, been obtained in this town and its vicinity, to be appropriated towards erecting the federal buildings, provided the seat of government be located so as to include Shepherd's-Town within the district."

The president escaped observation on the return trip; at least

no record of it has been preserved. What he was doing about the residence bill might be supposed was the prevailing topic, especially in the Potomac region, and such a state of affairs is pictured by the following gossipy paragraph that appeared under the date line Georgetown, Nov. 10, in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* of Nov. 16, 1790, and apparently copied in the fashion of that day from one of the two Georgetown newspapers, only very incomplete files of which have been preserved.

"We hear that the president of the United States has ordered three plats of different parts on the Potomac to be laid out. Nothing certain respecting the fixed seat of government has as yet transpired."

The locations mapped out were in the vicinity of the Conococheague, at the mouth of the Monocacy, about forty miles from Georgetown and the vicinity of Georgetown.[1]

Washington arrived at Mount Vernon from his up-river trip the latter part of October, and a month later went to Philadelphia, where congress met early in December. During the recess of the summer, the effects of the government had been removed from New York to Philadelphia.[2] The furniture of the house occupied by the president had been taken by boat under the direction of Tobias Lear, the president's private secretary, and set up in the house on Market Street, near 6th Street, recently vacated by the owner Robert Morris.

[1] William Deakins to Washington, Georgetown, Nov. 3, 1790, stating that a surveyor was employed to lay down situations there: Francis Deakins to Washington, Monocacy, Nov. 12, 1790, enclosing a draft which he had prepared "of the lands you viewed about this place" with the offers of land for the public buildings. Their straitened circumstances, he explains, accounts for their offers not being more liberal. Also letter dated Baltimore, Nov. 8, 1790, O. N. Williams to Francis Deakins, "I understand that you intend to furnish the President with plats of land adjacent to the Conococheague." State Department, D.C., Papers.

[2] By a law passed in March, 1791, the clerks employed in the several offices were allowed "in addition to their respective salaries, their reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by the removal," and at that time a temporary addition was made to the salaries of several of the officials with the view of repaying such expenses.

Under date of Nov. 4, Mr. Lear informs Washington that he has just completed the removal. He states the corporation of Philadelphia is to advance the money for the additions and alterations made, which is to be refunded to the state out of the rent as it is paid by the president to the owner Mr. Morris.[1] The house was leased for two years, and Mr. Lear adds, "at the end of which a new house is to be ready for the accommodation of the president of the United States."

This is the first reference to the house erected by the state of Pennsylvania for the president, and which Washington refused to occupy, and in this particular his example was followed by his successor Mr. Adams.

Washington looked upon this enterprise with much apparent uneasiness and used it as an argument with the commissioners and others, not only of the importance of expedition in preparing a new national centre, but also of harmony in the work.

Perhaps it was the erection of this residence that inspired the utterances of the writer of a communication published in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Nov. 23, 1790, under the heading "General Remarks."

"Mr. Burke and Mr. Smith [members of the house from South Carolina] pretend to be certain," he observes, referring to the debate in congress on the residence bill, "that the flourishing state of Pennsylvania will have acquired so much wealth and influence during ten years residence of Congress in Philadelphia that the seat of government will never be moved from that city."

The writer then refers to the incident of the Paxton Boys some thirty years before, when the county and city of Philadelphia gave laws to the province. The frontier inhabitants, he states, conceived that an act passed by the assembly affected their interests, and three hundred of them, under the name of Paxton Boys, seized their rifles, mounted their horses and set off for Philadelphia. But they were met by a deputation of citizens which asked them to send delegates, instead of coming

[1] Rent 500 pounds, or about $1400 per year. Lear to Washington, Sept. 21, 1790. Letters to Washington, Vol. 76.

to the city in a body, which was done, and their grievances were adjusted.

In the next ten years, the writer pointed out, owing to the increase in the population in the western country, if indirect means were used to repeal the residence bill, 300,000 instead of 300 Paxton Boys would march in quest of redress.

"But the gentlemen from South Carolina say that Pennsylvania will threaten a separation rather than part with congress, and that the states will indulge them rather that part with them. This is really small talk about matters of the greatest magnitude. . . . At the end of ten years, the most prejudiced person will see and be convinced that the Patowmac is the proper place for the seat of government. For the space of one century after that period, it is possible, it may be alternately on the Patowmac and the Belle Riviere after the manner of Babylon and Sufa in the time of Cyrus."

Upon his arrival in Philadelphia, Washington found that Mr. Jefferson, his secretary of state, no doubt in compliance with the president's request, had set down his views of the residence law and the method of carrying it out. This paper shows the acuteness of mind and the fertility of resources of the great Virginian. While he points out that no authority is given in the law to build a town, yet he is of the opinion that "the expression 'such quantity of land as the President shall deem proper for the United States' is vague, it may therefore be extended to the acceptance or purchase of land enough for the town; and I have no doubt it is the wish and perhaps expectation in that case to be laid out in lots and streets. I should propose these to be at right angles as in Philadelphia and that no street be narrower than one hundred feet, with foot ways of fifteen feet. Where a street is long and level, it might be one hundred and twenty feet wide."

The "disgusting monotony" produced in Philadelphia, due to the obligation to build houses "at a given distance from the street," is objected to, while the regulation in Paris restricting houses to a given height meets with his approval and, in fact, became a part of the early building regulations.

On the important and, in this connection, vital question of how to get the land without the expenditure of great sums of money, Mr. Jefferson suggests various plans, and, as it turned out, one of these was adopted.

On the supposition that a site below the Little Falls should be decided upon, Mr. Jefferson suggests that the area of acceptance be to the Eastern Branch and then from the lower end of Alexandria to the commencement on the Maryland side, with the further suggestion of amendatory legislation authorizing the president to include land on the south side of the Eastern Branch. The prospects of the Eastern Branch as a trade centre were evidently highly thought of by Jefferson, as he says: "In locating the town, will it not be best to give it double the extent on the Eastern Branch of what it has on the river? The former will be for persons in commerce, the latter for those connected with the government."

Jefferson supposed that 1500 acres would be sufficient for the city, while Washington included four times that area. In his scheme each square would contain eight acres, and, as he suggested two squares or sixteen acres for the president's house, offices and gardens, and nine squares for the public walks, one can find here, the germ of the president's ground and the Mall of to-day, the most lavish provision for pleasure grounds and lawns that has ever been made in the plan of an American city, but which surpasses the conception of Jefferson's just as the entire city plan of Washington goes far beyond in proportions what Jefferson had in mind.[1] It may be inferred, as Jefferson discussed the Georgetown location in such detail the latter part of November, 1790, he probably felt pretty well assured of the president's choice. At any rate, he did not express an opinion as to the use to be made of any other site.

[1] State Department, D.C., Papers, Nov. 29, 1790. In the same collection is a letter from Jefferson to Washington, dated Sept. 1790, enclosing a memorandum suggesting the method of acquiring and holding the lands by transfer of the title to trustees, which was subsequently followed. Instead of 88 acres, as proposed by Jefferson for the president's ground and the Mall, 339 acres were set aside for such purposes.

The particular attention given to the Georgetown site is further indicated by a letter to Washington of Messrs. Deakins and Stoddert, dated Dec. 9, 1790, in which they give the results of inquiries made of Jacob Funk of Washington County, Md., the original proprietor of Hamburg, as to the situation of the lots in that town site. "We find," they state, "there are 287 lots laid out upon 130 acres of land. . . . The whole of the lots are in the hands of about 150 proprietors, principally Dutchmen residing in Frederick and Washington counties and in Pennsylvania who have hitherto held them in but little estimation, and we have reason to believe that the far greater part of them might now be purchased at a little more than the original cost, which was 5 pounds [$13.30] each lot; though there can be no doubt, that if the seat of government should be fixed so as to comprehend these lots, a much higher value would be instantly set upon them." [1]

In the meanwhile the good people in the vicinity of Hagerstown and Shepherdstown were hard at work adding to the subscription list which was to bring the national capital to their doors.[2]

More than a month passed, and then on the 24th of January, 1791, the decision was made known and the location of the federal district finally settled. On that date the president sent a message to congress stating that "in mature consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the several positions within the limits prescribed," he had by proclamation of the same date directed commissioners "to survey and limit a part of the territory of the ten mile square on both sides of the river Potomac so as to comprehend Georgetown in Maryland and extend to the Eastern Branch." But he adds that he has

[1] Potomac Flats Case. Record, Vol. 7, p. 2162.

[2] *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Dec. 3, 1790. Date line, Shepherdstown, Nov. 15. Such progress had been made that by the 6th of December, 1790, it was announced that the fund raised in Washington County, Md., for erecting the federal buildings had grown to upwards of $20,000. See also *Gazette of the United States*, Dec. 25, 1790, for a similar news paragraph under date line of Shepherds-Town, Dec. 6.

not given to the territory the whole extent of which it is susceptible in the direction of the river, because he looked upon it as important that congress should have an opportunity of considering whether by an amendatory law it would "authorize the location of the residue at the lower end of the present, so as to comprehend the Eastern Branch itself and some of the country on its lower side in Maryland and the town of Alexandria in Virginia. If, however," he continues, congress is "of the opinion that the federal territory should be bounded by the water edge of the Eastern Branch, the location of the residue will be made at the upper end of what is now directed." [1]

Congress without debate incorporated in an amendatory law of March 3, 1791, the suggestions made by the president of extending the limits of the federal district south of the Eastern Branch on the Maryland side, and also south on the Virginia side as far as Hunting Creek just south of Alexandria.[2] The conclusion reached by the president in exercising the authority conferred on him by law appears to have met the sanction of the public opinion of the day, for, as far as known, there is no record of a dissenting voice. Even in congress, where there was ample opportunity for the expression of opinion, there was no discussion.

Two days previous to the issue of the first proclamation, the president appointed Thomas Johnson and Daniel Carroll, of Maryland, and Dr. David Stuart, of Virginia, commissioners, who under his direction were to survey the District, to accept and purchase land on the eastern side of the river and to pro-

[1] Annals of Congress, Vol. 2, Jan. 24, 1791.

[2] It is interesting to note that while in the first proclamation the first of the four lines of experiment was to begin at Hunting Creek, yet the land south of the Eastern Branch and south of a line to be run southwest into Virginia from the upper cape of Eastern Branch was expressly excluded. Then by the second proclamation, dated March 30th, when the amendatory legislation had been secured, all lands included within the four ten-mile lines beginning at Hunting Creek and at Jones Point on that creek and comprising the bounds of the District as they exist to-day, except the Virginia portion, retroceded to that state over sixty years ago, were declared to be the limits of the federal district.

vide suitable buildings for the accommodations of congress, the president and the executive departments.

In the selection of the men to be intrusted with this important work, Washington's choice fell upon three who, in the first place, had been long and intimately associated with him. Thomas Johnson of Frederick, Md., was perhaps the most distinguished public man of his day in Maryland, having received many marks of confidence from the people of the state as well as from President Washington. He was then in his sixtieth year. His home was in Frederick, Md., fifty-two miles from the scene of his proposed labors, and no doubt the state of the roads had something to do with his more frequent absences from the meetings of the board than was the case with either of his colleagues. There was another interest, however, that soon engaged his attention, for some six months after his appointment as one of the commissioners he was honored by receiving from the hands of Washington an appointment as justice of the United States supreme court. He took his seat in August, 1792, and after eighteen months' service resigned in February, 1794. In August of the same year he retired from the board of city commissioners, and a year later received a further mark of Washington's esteem by being offered the position of secretary of state just made vacant by the retirement of Edmund Randolph, which he declined.[1] Mr. Johnson, in addition to his wide experience in public affairs and his ability as an executive, had the further qualification as commissioner of the new city of being familiar with the people and the locality. According to tradition, his temperament was testy, some evidences of which are to be traced in the letters he wrote to the commissioners after his retirement from the board relative to his lots on Rock Creek, which he maintained, with much asperity, were not within the distinction of water lots as applied to the Potomac River front.

Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek was in his sixty-first year. He was living with his mother at the homestead near what is

[1] History of the Supreme Court of the United States. Hampton L. Carson, Vol. 1, p. 162. Phila., 1902.

now Forest Glen, Md., and was the nearest of the three to the scene of his new activities. A member of the large family of Carrolls in Maryland, and, having rendered service to the state both in the continental and the United States congress, he was identified with the locality. Although the owner of land in the northern portion of the District, and uncle of Daniel Carroll of Duddington, the largest individual owner of the land included within the limits of the city, such interests were evidently not looked upon in that day as disqualifying a man from performing a duty towards the public. In fact, it will be noted, as the narrative proceeds, that there were quite a number of similar instances of men interested as property holders who also became identified with the management of the affairs of the city.[1]

The third member of the board of commissioners was Dr. David Stuart of Hope Park, a farm of 2000 acres, a few miles from Fairfax Court House, Va. He was a personal friend of the president and had become a connection by marrying the widow of John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington. His home, some twenty miles from Alexandria, gave him the advantage of being familiar with local conditions. He was a practising physician.[2] As may be concluded, these appointments secured leaders in the new enterprise who were men of affairs, as well as favorably and widely known in the particular locality of the federal district, and, as far as Messrs. Johnson and Carroll were concerned, in state and national relations. No doubt the personnel of the board had much to do with the enterprise escaping ship-

[1] During the eleven years of the control of city affairs by commissioners there is no instance of maladministration, although the charge was made from time to time of favoritism towards individuals in certain sections of the city.

[2] "A man of excellent character, of studious habits, inoffensive deportment and good family . . . by his uniform integrity and irreproachable life, engaged and preserved, in a remarkable degree, General Washington's confidence and friendship." Observations on the writings of Thomas Jefferson, p. 93. Henry Lee. Phila., 1839. Advertisement offering for sale the farm of Dr. David Stuart, deceased. *Intelligencer*, May 11, 1815.

wreck on the rocks which were abundant enough in the course of an undertaking that was but meagrely supplied with funds and had hostile and jealous critics both at home and abroad.

On the same day Washington issued the proclamation he began a correspondence with Colonel William Deakins and Benjamin Stoddert, both residents of Georgetown and men of public spirit with whom he had come in close contact during his years of public service. For the exact location of the city within the new territory was to be determined, and what was, under the circumstances, of most vital consequence, a favorable agreement was to be made with the property holders to secure the lands needed, not alone for the location of the public buildings, but also for the homes and the places of business of the population that would come to such a centre.

A paramount consideration was the revenue that might be derived from the sale of the public property, for while the grants from the states of Virginia and Maryland aggregating $192,000 were no doubt regarded at the time, if not ample, at least a good working capital, yet the framers of the residence bill considered the grants of land from individual property owners as constituting a generous and sufficient margin. This faith in the rising market of land values, as well as a failure to realize the cost of capital building, may be looked upon as accounting in great part for the omission from the residence bill of a direct appropriation.[1]

Washington's knowledge of the local situation is shown in this letter dated Feb. 3, 1791, in which he says that, "the competition for the location of the town now rests between the mouth of the Eastern Branch and the lands on the river below and adjacent to Georgetown. In favor of the former, Nature

[1] An early recognition of the influence on real estate values of the location of the new city is to be found in this letter of Washington to the men who acted as his agents in the preliminary negotiation and from whom he asked "the most profound secrecy." He told them they were to give the widest publicity to the proclamation which he was forwarding, "to prevent," he adds, "any kind of speculation." Washington's Letter Book, No. XI.

has furnished powerful advantages.[1] In favor of the latter is its vicinity to Georgetown. . . . These advantages have been so poised in my mind as to give it different tendencies at different times."

Then he goes on to speak of the obstacle in the way of the Georgetown locality due to the lands to the southwest of a line "from where the road crosses Goose Creek in going from Georgetown to the Eastern Branch," which, as he expresses it, "stands yet in the way of the latter location." This is the first reference to the property holder, who has come down in the history of the city as "the obstinate Mr. Burns," and who at this early stage in the proceedings had shown an unyielding disposition. A reference to a portion of Daniel Carroll's land, lying between that of David Burnes and Notley Young, indicates that no arrangement had as yet been made with him as to that particular section of his property.

Washington's instructions were to purchase these lands, but especially that of Mr. Burnes, and "to so conduct themselves as to excite no suspicion that they are on behalf of the public." As to the price, Washington directs them to stipulate for two weeks' time to consider, in other words an option, "at the end of which," he adds, "you should be free to be on and off, but the seller not so." By such an arrangement, he explains, they will have time to consult him. As showing the entire dependence at this stage on the funds from the two states, he reminds them that, "the circumstances of the funds appropriated by the states of Virginia and Maryland will require that a twelve months' credit be stipulated."

A week later Washington was informed by his agents of their intention to offer Mr. Burnes as high as twelve or eighteen pounds, or from $32 to $48 per acre, but in the event he should ask twenty-five pounds, or $67 per acre, they would await further instructions. So, under date of Feb. 17, 1791, Washington informs them that "to prevent delay I would wish his lands to be purchased even at those prices rather than not

[1] Jefferson, as noted above, had a similar idea of the Eastern Branch and its future.

obtain them."[1] The rate of twenty-five pounds, or $67 per acre, was the one fixed upon in the agreement made later on with the landholders to be paid for all land taken by the United States for public purposes. In the same letter Washington instructs Messrs. Deakins and Stoddert to buy as many as possible of the lots in the town site of Hamburg or Funkstown, but "not exceeding the rate of twenty-five pounds per acre." Under the Maryland law a quantity of land not exceeding one hundred and thirty acres could be taken by condemnation, and Washington expressed the wish to effect the transfer by sale of as much of the Hamburg property as possible, so as not to use up this privilege, but to have it in reserve for future contingencies.

The instructions of the president in regard to the Hamburg property were followed, and on the 21st of February, 1791, an agreement was entered into with owners of forty-five out of the two hundred and eighty-seven lots agreeing to sell at the price fixed upon in the condemnation proceedings, if it was necessary to resort to that method.[2]

The end of February came, and evidently nothing had been accomplished with Mr. Burnes. In the meantime, the president had set in motion other parts of the business. While the commissioners had been appointed who were empowered by the law "under the direction of the President to survey" a district, and who also were given the power "to purchase or to accept" land, yet the president was proceeding to exercise both of these powers. One reason, no doubt, was the fact that Mr. Carroll was still a member of the house of representatives, his term not expiring until March 4. In fact, the first meeting of the commissioners was not held until March 12. Yet Washington, more than a month previous to the commissioners' taking up their work, appointed Andrew Ellicott to survey the bounds of the District and later on Charles Pierre L'Enfant to prepare

[1] Washington's Letter Book, No. XI.

[2] Papers of the Commissioners. Book of agreements. The plan that was carried out both as to the Hamburg and the Carrollsburg lots was an equal exchange for the lots laid out in accordance with the plan of the city and as near as possible the same ground.

a plan of the city.[1] Andrew Ellicott was the first on the scene of action, with instructions, as was done later in the case of L'Enfant, to apply to the mayor of Georgetown for money to defray his expenses. He received a letter of instruction from Jefferson under date of Feb. 2, 1791, "to proceed by the first stage to the federal territory on the Potomac for the purpose of making a survey of it." [2]

When Ellicott arrived in Georgetown to enter upon his work, he was accompanied, according to the *Georgetown Weekly Ledger* of March 12, 1791, by Benjamin Banneker, "an Ethiopian whose abilities as a surveyor and astronomer clearly proves that Mr. Jefferson's concluding that race of men were void of mental endowments was without foundation."

In the selection of Andrew Ellicott and Major L'Enfant, the policy was continued of securing not only competent men for the work, but the leading men in the various lines. Andrew Ellicott was then in his thirty-seventh year, having been born in Bucks County, Penn., of English stock. His father established flour mills about ten miles west of Baltimore, and the place still bears the name of Ellicott Mills. His father's family belonged to the society of friends, but in the war of the revolution the principles of the society did not prevent the son from giving his services to the cause of his country. He became a major in the Maryland militia.

After the war he engaged in his profession of surveyor, and was

[1] The action of Washington in making these appointments resulted in fixing in L'Enfant's mind the notion that he was independent of the commissioners and subordinate only to the president, — a conception which soon led to a situation that compelled the retirement of L'Enfant from all connection with the city, although with his temperament the result would have been the same under almost any circumstances.

[2] Jefferson to Ellicott. Sketch of the life of Andrew Ellicott. Mrs. Sally Kennedy Alexander. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2. Also a letter of Ellicott to his wife dated Alexandria, Va., Feb. 14, 1791, announcing his arrival in that place a day or two previous. "I shall leave this town," he states, "this afternoon to begin the rough survey of the ten mile square." He adds, "I have been treated with great politeness by the inhabitants, who are truly rejoiced at the prospect of being included in the Federal District."

employed by the state of Virginia in the year 1784, in completing the survey of the boundary between Virginia and Pennsylvania, known as the Mason and Dixon line. Later on he was employed by the state of Pennsylvania to run the west and north lines of that state. When he was thirty-two years of age, he was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society. In the year 1789, he removed his residence from Baltimore to Philadelphia. He also surveyed the western boundary of New York state and had the assistance in this work of his brothers, Joseph and Benjamin Ellicott. He completed that duty in the fall of 1790, and in the following spring he was engaged to determine the bounds of the new federal district.

Arriving at the scene of his new labors before the middle of February, 1791, he began at once that work.[1] Nearly a month later, and on the 9th of March, 1791, there arrived in Georgetown, stated the *Georgetown Weekly Ledger* of March 12th, "Major Longfont, a French gentleman employed by the President of the United States, to survey the lands contiguous to Georgetown where the federal city is to be built."[2]

Major L'Enfant came with instructions "to confine himself to the lands within the Eastern Branch, the Potomac River, the Tiber and the road leading from Georgetown to the ferry on the Eastern Branch. He was directed to begin at the lower end and work upwards, and nothing further is communicated to him."[3] In the letter of instruction to L'Enfant, written by Jefferson on behalf of the president, he was told, "You are directed to proceed to Georgetown, where you will find Mr. Ellicott employed in making a survey and map of the federal territory. The special object in asking your aid is to

[1] "Mr. Ellicott, we learn, finished the first line of his survey of the Federal territory in Virginia yesterday, and crossed below the Little Falls, the river Patowmack, on the second line." *Gazette of the United States*, March 5, 1791. Date line, Georgetown, February 23.

[2] Letter of L'Enfant to Jefferson. Georgetown, March 11, 1791. Major Charles Pierre L'Enfant. J. D. Morgan. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2.

[3] Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI, March 2, 1791. Washington to Deakins and Stoddert. The northern boundary followed generally the line of Pennsylvania Avenue, both east and west.

have drawings of the particular grounds most likely to be offered for the site of the federal town and buildings." [1]

Washington hastened to write to his agents, "If you have concluded nothing with Mr. Burns nor made him any offer for his land that is obligatory, I pray you to suspend your negotiations with him until you hear further from me." This was on the 28th of February, and on March 2 he again writes, a week still in advance of the coming of L'Enfant.

After stating as above the character of the instructions given to L'Enfant, he adds, "The purpose of this letter is to desire you will not be yourself misled by this appearance nor be diverted from the pursuit of the objects I have recommended to you. I expect that your progress in accomplishing them will be facilitated by the presumption which will arise on seeing this operation begun at the Eastern Branch and that the proprietors nearer Georgetown who have hitherto refused to accommodate will let themselves down to reasonable terms. . . . I have referred Major L'Enfant to the mayor of Georgetown for necessary aids and expenses. Should there be any difficulties on this subject, I would hope your aid in having them surmounted, tho' I have not named you to him or anybody else, that no suspicions may be excited of your acting for the public." In a sort of a postscript Washington states that the above letter "explains to you the motive of my request in a letter of the 28th ult. I now authorize the renewal of the negotiations with Mr. Burns agreeably to the former powers at such time and in such a manner as likely to produce the desired effect." [2]

[1] The day in March, 1791, when this letter was written does not appear in the copy in the Jefferson Papers, library of congress.

[2] L. of C., Toner. Two weeks later Washington concluded it was no longer necessary in the interests of the negotiations with the landowners to preserve the secret agency in the business intrusted to Messrs. Deakins and Stoddert, and so he writes to them under date of March 17. L. of C., Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI, p. 125. He is discussing the situation relative to the Hamburg lot holders and following a suggestion adds, "I am aware that by this means it will become known that you are acting for the public, but there will be no reason for keeping this longer secret after my arrival at Georgetown."

Thus early in March the president had adopted a practical method of bringing the rival interests of the Eastern Branch or Carrollsburg and of Georgetown into harmony. It is quite evident that Mr. Burnes, who owned a large portion of the land that now lies between the president's house and the capitol and for some distance to the north and the south, either did not want to sell, or insisted as one condition at least of parting with his property that the public buildings should be located there, and thus early in the history of the city began that struggle between the different sections which continued for so many years to play an important part in local affairs. The property holders of Carrollsburg had a similar ambition, but it is evident from the prominence attained by Mr. Burnes in the negotiations that in addition he made difficulties about the terms, which in case of such a large and essential holding, amply accounts for the attention given to it.

Washington shrewdly concluded that the spectacle of the French engineer engaged in making a survey for the location of the city and confining his work exclusively to the Eastern Branch and having no inkling himself but that was to be the chosen spot, would cause Mr. Burnes and those of like mind to be more amenable. As the sequel showed, this did not prove to be entirely the case, and it was not until Washington came on and talked with the property holders that an agreement was reached. Jefferson, however, with his notions of an area for the city one fourth less in size than what Washington had in mind and believing, as Washington explained, "that no offer worthy of consideration would come from the land holders in the vicinity of Carrollsburg," made a rough sketch of an outline plan for the city adapted to the Georgetown locality.[1] The paper is without date, but as it also contains a draft of the amendatory proclamation extending to the south the bounds of the federal district and as that instrument was issued March 30,

"With regard to Mr. Burns I will confer with you on my arrival as to what is best to do in his case, should you not have obtained a cession from him in the meantime."

[1] Jefferson Papers, Series 4, Vol. 1, p. 121. Washington to L'Enfant, Mount Vernon, April 4, 1791. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

1791, the date of Jefferson's suggestion can be approximately determined as shortly before that time and probably before March 21st, on which date Washington left Philadelphia on a southern

JEFFERSON'S PLAN OF THE MALL.

tour. In a separate paragraph at the end it is provided "that the highest summit of land in the town heretofore called Hamburg, within the territory with a convenient extent of grounds

circumjacent, shall be appropriated for a capitol for the accommodation of Congress and such other lands between Georgetown and the stream heretofore called the Tyber as should, in due examination, be found convenient and sufficient, shall be appropriated for the accommodation of the president of the United States for the time being and for the public offices of the government of the United States."

On the preceding page is a drawing showing the location of the capitol and the president's house, with the broad area for "the public walks" connecting them and extending to the south. The capitol building is represented as occupying the western part of Hamburg with the president's house to the east and the public walks extending south to the Potomac. As the limits of the town site of Hamburg on the east were about where the present line of 19th Street, south of Pennsylvania Avenue, passes, Mr. Jefferson's scheme placed the president's house near that line, exactly reversing the relative positions of the two buildings as finally determined upon, but otherwise the relative location of the two structures with the connecting space of what came to be known as the Mall is exactly reproduced in this sketch plan of the city, the first that was made. The rectangular system of the streets as advocated by Mr. Jefferson is an essential feature of the plan and contrasts with the open spaces and rounded lines which L'Enfant imparted to the plan while preserving the general scheme of the Jefferson sketch.

By the end of March the negotiations conducted by Washington at a distance, but as the correspondence shows, as well as the result, with much shrewdness and knowledge of human nature, were in such a state as to warrant his appearance in person. So he decided to visit Georgetown. The story of this visit and his talks with the landowners are found in his diary.[1] He left Philadelphia for a southern tour on the 21st of March, 1791, and owing to the bad state of the roads came to Annapolis by water. On the 27th instant, in the morning, he left Annapolis, stopped at Queen Ann on the Patuxent and lodged that night at Bladensburg. Leaving the latter place at 6.30

[1] Diary of George Washington for 1789–1791.

on the morning of March 28th, he was met on the road by the principal citizens of Georgetown, and escorted by them to Suter's Tavern, where he lodged.[1] He spent the day in examining the surveys of Mr. Ellicott, "who had been sent on," he explains, "to lay out the district of ten miles square for the federal seat: and also the works of Major L'Enfant, who had been engaged "to examine and make a draught of the grounds in the vicinity of Georgetown and Carrollsburg." [2] That evening the president was entertained at dinner at Suter's Tavern by the mayor, Thomas Beall, and the corporation of Georgetown. The president also met by appointment the three men whom he had selected as commissioners of the city. In company with the latter the next day the president rode over the site of the new city, but owing to a thick mist his experience was not very satisfactory.

At six o'clock that day at his request, the land holders about Georgetown and those about Carrollsburg met him at Suter's. "To this meeting," observes Washington, "I represented that the contention in which they seemed engaged, did not, in my opinion, comport either with the public interest or that of their own, that while each party was aiming to obtain the public buildings, they might, by placing the matter on a contracted scale, defeat the measure altogether, not only by procrastination but for want of the means necessary to effect the work, that neither the offer from Georgetown or Carrollsburg separately was adequate to the end of insuring the object: that both together did not comprehend more ground, nor would afford greater means than was required for the federal city and that instead of contending which of the two should have it, they had better by combining more offers make a common cause of it, and thereby secure it to the district."

[1] The tavern is supposed to have been on Wisconsin Avenue near the Virginia ferry.

[2] L'Enfant states he had a rough drawing in pencil of his several surveys, ready for the inspection of the president. L'Enfant to Jefferson, Georgetown, April 4, 1791. State Department, D.C., Papers, also Potomac Flats Case. Record, Vol. 7, p. 2179. But up to that time he had not included in his study the western section of the city.

The conference ended, and Washington took dinner with Uriah Forrest, the city commissioners and other guests being present. The next day, or March 30, 1791, Washington records in his diary that "the parties to whom I addressed myself yesterday evening having taken the matter into consideration saw the propriety of my observations . . . and therefore mutually agreed and entered into articles to surrender for public purposes, one half of the land they severally possessed within bounds which were designated as necessary for the city, to stand with some other stipulations which were inserted in the instrument, which they respectively subscribed."

"This business being thus happily finished," concludes Washington, and one can almost hear the sigh of relief even at this interval of time, he left Georgetown, dined in Alexandria and reached Mount Vernon that evening. He remained there a week, or until the 7th of April, when he started on a tour through the southern states.

On the same day that the agreement was reached with the owners of land designed to be included within the limits of the new city, Washington issued a proclamation announcing the exact lines of the federal district.[1]

Writing the next day to Jefferson, Washington informed him that all the principal land holders assented to the conditions "and it is not doubted," he adds, "that the few who were not present will readily concur in the measure, even the obstinate Mr. Burns." He also explains in courteous treatment of the suggestions relative to the plan proposed by Mr. Jefferson, of the location of the public buildings that "the enlarged plan of this agreement having done away with the necessity and

[1] The first line was to be run from Hunting Creek, northwest ten miles, thence northeast ten miles. From the south corner a line was to be run northeast ten miles, thence northwest ten miles to the end of the second line or the north corner of the district. As the surveys showed, the territory included within these lines was sixty square miles of land in the state of Maryland, thirty square miles of land in the state of Virginia and ten square miles covered by the waters of the Potomac River and the Eastern Branch. The proclamation of March 30, 1791, is in the Writings of George Washington. Jared Sparks, Vol. 10, p. 148.

indeed postponed the propriety of designating the particular spot on which the public buildings should be placed, until an accurate survey and subdivision of the whole ground is made, I have left out that paragraph of the proclamation."[1] A suggestion made by Mr. Jefferson to include Bladensburg in the District is referred to in the same letter, and Washington explains that it was not done for the reason that "it was found on running the lines that the comprehension of Bladensburg with the district must have occasioned the exclusion of more important objects."

He also mentions the terms of the agreement by which land from Rock Creek to the Potomac and the Eastern Branch with a breadth of about a mile and a half and a length of over three miles had been secured.[2] "In consideration of the great benefits we expect to derive from having the federal city laid off upon our lands," the paper of March 30, 1791, recites that the subscribers agree to convey in trust the whole of their lands upon the condition that "the president shall have the sole power of directing the federal city to be laid off in what manner he pleases." The lots, it was agreed, were to be divided equally between the public and the individuals. For the streets, the proprietors to receive no compensation, but for the land taken for public uses, the owners to be paid at the rate of twenty-five pounds per acre. The wood on the land was to be the property of the proprietors, and for any desired to be left standing, the public to give a proper compensation. The proprietors were to retain the use of the land until it should be sold, and they were also to retain their buildings and graveyards, where the plan of the streets permitted paying for such land at the rate of twelve pounds ten shillings per acre, and in cases where it became necessary to remove such buildings, then the owners were to be paid their value.[3]

[1] Washington to Jefferson, March 31, 1791. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

[2] The area finally taken was four and one half miles in length and three and one half miles in breadth.

[3] The copy of this agreement preserved in the manuscript volume, Proceedings of Commissioners, War Department, has in the list of

In reply to Washington's letter of March 31st, Jefferson writing from Philadelphia, April 10, 1791, exclaims, "The acquisition of ground is really noble, considering that only twenty-five pounds an acre is to be paid for any grounds taken for the public and the streets not to be counted, which will in fact reduce it to about nineteen pounds per acre, I think very liberal reserves should be made for the public." [1] At the time the agreement was made with the property holders L'Enfant had been on the ground some three weeks. In accordance with the instructions received he had confined his study to the locality known as the Eastern Branch or Carrollsburg, which included the property of Daniel Carroll of Duddington, and therefore its northern limits were presumably some distance to the north of the capitol building and did not extend much to the westward of that point. An undated and unaddressed manuscript in L'Enfant's handwriting, and evidently prepared shortly after he came to the city as a report to the president, gives the French engineer's idea of the treatment of what was ultimately only a portion of the land included in the area of the city plan.[2] L'Enfant notes almost at the

signers the name of David Burnes. The complete list is as follows: Robert Peter, David Burnes, James M. Lingan, Uriah Forrest, Benj. Stoddert, Notley Young, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Overton Carr, Thos. Beall of Geo., Chas. Beatty, Anthony Holmead, Wm. Young, Edward Peirce, Abraham Young, James Peirce, Wm. Prout, Robert Peter as attorney in fact for Eliphas Douglas, Benjamin Stoddert for John Waring, and Wm. King. Three years later Benjamin Oden agreed to convey his land on the same conditions. The latter was living at Woodyard, Md., a few miles east of the city and he was the representative of the late Stephen West, owner of a tract of land in the eastern section of the city. A tract of 500 acres within the city, owned by John Waring of Prince George County, represented in the agreement by Benj. Stoddert, was bought by Wm. Bagley for himself, and for Benj. Stoddert, Philip Richard Fendall, Uriah Forrest and Wm. Deakins, Jr., but by June 29, 1791, no deed of conveyance had been made to them. They, however, agreed to convey the land to the city in the future. This tract was subsequently purchased by Samuel Blodget. Proceedings of Commissioners, June 27, 1791.

[1] Jefferson Papers. Series 1, Vol. 4, No. 167.

[2] Note relative to the ground lying on the Eastern Branch. War Department Manuscripts. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 26, Vol. 2.

outset what probably appealed to him as a military man and that is the utility of the hills encircling the plain — or as some later observers have expressed it, like the rim of a saucer — as a means of protection. The first time the need arose, and that was at the outbreak of the civil war, this natural defence of the nation's capital was promptly made use of, and a chain of forts was built on the surrounding hills. The next point that L'Enfant calls attention to is Jenkins Hill, now known as Capitol Hill, which he states is the most desirable position for the public buildings. He also proposed the erection of a bridge over the Eastern Branch about the present locality of the end of East Capitol Street with a broad avenue lined with trees stretching through the city and on to Georgetown and carried over the Potomac on a bridge to be erected "at the place of the Two Sisters." In this sketch also may be found the germ of L'Enfant's plan for the streets and avenues, which, as carried out, adapted to the larger area, remains after more than a century one of the distinctive and most admired features of the nation's capital.

"It is not," he states, "the regular assemblage of houses laid out in squares and forming streets, all parallel and uniform, that is so necessary, for such a plan could do on a well level plain, and when no surrounding object being interesting it becomes indifferent, which way the opening of the streets may be directed. Such a regular plan," observes L'Enfant in his imperfect English, but with a disdain that was not concealed even though Jefferson was advocating the rectangular plan of Philadelphia, "is but a mean continuance of some cool imagination wanting a sense of the real grand and truly beautiful, only to be met with when nature contribute with art and diversify the objects."

The proposed extent of the city was not described in the agreement signed by the property owners, March 30, 1791, and Washington, as he himself states, intended what he said on that subject to be general until more precise knowledge could be obtained as to the lay of the land, the heights, water courses, etc. But he maintained that by his reference to the area of

the city of Philadelphia that he intended to convey the impression that the new city was not to be on a contracted scale.[1] In the course of the letter written to Jefferson the day after the Georgetown conference, Washington gives roughly the proposed bounds of the city, which were the river and the Eastern Branch on the south, up the latter "to or above the ferry [which was a short distance south of the foot of Pennsylvania Avenue, E.], including a breadth of about a mile and a half, the whole including from three to four thousand acres."

Three days later, on April 4th, in writing to L'Enfant, he states that in his opinion all the lands should be included within the bounds of the city, "lying between Rock Creek, Potomac River and the Eastern Branch and as far up the latter as the turn in the channel above Evans Point [half a mile north of the ferry]; these including the flat back of Jenkins height [since known as Capitol Hill]: thence to the road leading from Georgetown to Bladensburg as far easterly along the same as to include the branch which runs across it [at 7th Street northwest], somewhere near the exterior of the Georgetown Session[2]; thence in a proper direction to Rock Creek at or above the ford [near the present P Street bridge] according to the situation of the ground."

However, when in the course of a few days the proprietors were asked to give legal effect to the agreement, and sign deeds transferring to Thomas Beall of George and John M. Gantt as trustees the lands owned by them and designed as the location of the city, it was found that the bounds of the city were defined in these documents and for the first time set down in writing.

As far as it is now possible to form a conclusion about the location of lines not surveyed but described to some extent by landmarks long since forgotten, the area of the city as defined

[1] Washington to the Commissioners, Charleston, S.C., May 7, 1791. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

[2] By the Maryland law of Dec. 25, 1789, all the portion of Montgomery County lying within a quarter of a mile of the limits of Georgetown was made the precincts of the town and placed under the jurisdiction of the corporation.

in the deeds coincided with that described by Washington in his letter to L'Enfant and apparently with that of the city as finally laid out.

Five of the property holders refused to sign the deeds because of the description given of the boundary lines. They maintained that a greater quantity of land was included than they had understood the president to have in mind, besides "taking land we never had in contemplation . . . would only tend to lessen the value of the rest . . . as the price of lots would diminish in proportion as the number for sale increased." [1] On the same day the commissioners received a letter [2] signed by Charles Beatty, George Walker, who had become the owner of the property belonging to Overton Carr, Thomas Beall of George, and Samuel Davidson, the latter having acquired the land owned by Edward Pierce, about Lafayette Square, stating they had signed the deeds and protesting against anything being done "to frustrate the views of the president." From the outline given of the bounds of the city by the protestants it is conjectured that it was their wish to exclude practically all of what is now the northeastern and a portion of the northwestern sections of the city, as the northern limits were to be a line drawn from the Eastern Branch and passing as near as can now be judged in a straight line a short distance north of East Capitol Street, "over Goose Creek some distance above the fording place." This latter location is believed to have been a short distance north of the capitol building. From that point to pass in a northwesterly direction "to intersect the road leading from Georgetown to Bladensburg about half a mile from Rock Creek." The modern point where such a straight line drawn from near the capitol would strike Florida Avenue, which preserves the meanders of the old Bladensburg Road, from 7th Street to the P Street bridge, is conjectured would be somewhere between 18th and 16th streets, N. W.

[1] Letter from Robert Peter, Notley Young, James M. Lingan, Forrest and Stoddert to the Commissioners, April 14, 1791. Letter Book of Commissioners, Vol. I.

[2] The same.

The opposition to the larger plan of the president was so persistent that it was not until the 29th of June, nearly three months after the agreement had been made, that the protesting property holders yielded and signed the deeds.[1]

Before the news reached Washington of this hitch in the affairs of the new city, he wrote to the commissioners that it had been "intimated to me that the proprietors of Georgetown are desirous of being comprehended within the limits of the Federal City."[2] He adds that he sees no objection, providing the property holders come in on the same terms as those on the east side of Rock Creek. But that appears to have ended the matter.[3]

The president, who by that time had reached Charleston, S.C., in the course of his southern tour, expressed in a letter to the commissioners under date of May 7, 1791,[4] his disappointment that "the fair prospect which it presented when I left Georgetown," should be darkened, and then declares that if he had discovered at the conference with the property holders "a disposition to contract my views, I should have then pointed out the inconveniences and the impolicy of the measure." In this letter is another of the numerous allusions made at this time by Washington to what was being done in Philadelphia to provide buildings for the federal government and the underlying motive. He made use of it to give point to his admonitions to all connected with the new enterprise to be prompt and harmonious in action. He thought the friends of the residence

[1] The bounds of the city as understood by the protesting property holders to have been outlined by Washington, and as given above, were apparently identical with those found in a contemporary account, in a letter dated March 31, 1791, written the day after the conference by "a gentleman at Georgetown to his friend in this town," and printed in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* of April 9, 1791.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Richmond, Va., April 13, 1791. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

[3] It is rather singular this letter contains the first reference made, since the federal district was located, to Georgetown being a portion of the city. The subject was not revived until some years later, when a movement was started to unite the two cities.

[4] Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

bill would agree with him in the advisibility of proceeding with as little delay as possible in view of the news from Philadelphia as given by Mr. Jefferson in a letter dated March 27, in which he informed Washington that on the day before a bill had been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature to appropriate money for building a federal hall, a house for the president, etc. "This (though I do not want any sentiment of mine promulgated with respect to it)," Washington adds, "marks unequivocally in my mind the necessity of exertion to carry the residence law into effect agreeably thereto." [1]

Washington's views on this subject were no doubt fixed the more firmly by the intelligence he received from his private secretary at Philadelphia, who kept his chief posted on current happenings.[2]

Lear writes, "Mr. Ellicott has returned from surveying the federal territory, and the flattering account which he gives of the spot and the prospect of things in that quarter, added to other information of the same kind, which has been received here, have created a serious and to many an alarming expectation that the law for establishing the permanent seat will be carried fully into effect. This idea has heretofore been treated very lightly by people in general here. They now begin to view it in another shape and the opposition given in the assembly of the state to appropriating money for the purpose of erecting suitable buildings for the accommodation of the president and congress carried along with it (in the course

[1] Washington to the Commissioners, April 3, 1791. Washington Letters, War Department. A correspondent of the *Gazette of the United States*, in the issue of March 30, 1791, observes in regard to the Pennsylvania measure, "that the design of the legislation is not to interfere with the general arrangement already made respecting the permanent seat of government of the United States, as such buildings will be needed by the state in ten years."

Washington also refers to this movement in Pennsylvania in a letter to Stoddert and Deakins of April 1 and uses the incident as an argument for expedition in the business of the new city. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

[2] Tobias Lear to Washington, April 24, 1791. Letters to Washington.

of the debate) the aspect that the western part of Pennsylvania will be more pleased with having the seat of the general government on the Patowmack than in Philadelphia. The consideration of the question was postponed to the next session, but it is very doubtful whether it will be determined in favor of building or not."

Under date of Sept. 21, 1791, Lear records a visit from "Mr. Fisher representing the city in providing the rented house for the president. He had just come," Mr. Lear naïvely adds, "from a large dinner at Mr. Morris's, and he did not appear to be much guarded in his conversation." Mr. Fisher explained that the state desired to own a house in Philadelphia, so that in the event of any attempt to move the state capital away, this property of the state where the governor lived would be an argument against it.[1] In addition to writing to the commissioners and to Messrs. Deakins and Stoddert, and to Jefferson, Washington during the few days he remained at Mount Vernon before going south also wrote to L'Enfant, enclosing for his inspection "the rough sketch by Mr. Jefferson" referred to above and also another sketch but, unlike that of Mr. Jefferson's, not designed for any particular spot.[2]

[1] The law authorizing the erection of such a house was passed before the end of the year, appropriating $120,000. A site was secured on 8th Street, south of Market Street, and the corner-stone was laid May 10, 1792. On the 17th of March, 1800 [just prior to the removal of the government from Philadelphia to the District] the legislature authorized the sale of the house for $40,000 to the University of Pennsylvania. Historic Mansions of Philadelphia, Thompson Westcott, Philadelphia, 1877.

[2] L'Enfant had written to Jefferson, April 4, 1791, to send him maps of such cities as London, Madrid, Amsterdam, Naples, Venice, Genoa and Florence, and in a letter of April 10, 1791, Jefferson writing to Washington speaks of L'Enfant's request and that he had sent him plans of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Carlsruhe, Amsterdam, Strasburg, Paris, Orleans, Bordeaux, Lyons, Montpelier, Marseilles, Turin and Milan. In this letter he again reverts to his ideal of a city plan, namely, that of Philadelphia, and adds, referring to the plans of the cities named, "There are none of them comparable to the old Babylon revived in Philadelphia and exemplified." Jefferson to Washington, State Department, D.C., Papers. Also in Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2181.

It may be concluded that early in April L'Enfant began his studies of a plan of a city covering the larger area, which had just been publicly decided upon by Washington. But what he devised shows no trace of the influence of any of the plans of cities mentioned unless the plan devised by Sir Christopher Wrenn for the rebuilding of London after the great fire of 1666 was included. For in that plan, as well as in the laying out of the gardens of Versailles by Le Notre in 1669, are to be found principal points with radiating approaches, a suggestion of the distinctive feature of the L'Enfant plan.

The origin of the other principal feature, the relative positions of the capitol and the president's house with the connecting mall, or public walks, a term used both by Jefferson and L'Enfant, may be ascribed to Jefferson's rough sketch.

Ellicott had advanced his work of surveying the lines of the District, so that on the 15th of March the first corner-stone of the District boundary was laid at Jones Point, just south of Alexandria, and where in after years a lighthouse was located. The corner-stone now forms a portion of the foundation of the lighthouse. As this was the first event of the sort in the history of the city, an effort was made on the part of the commissioners to give it due prominence, but it may be presumed that it was not so much for the benefit of future generations as for the influence upon the contemporary mind, serving as a sort of object lesson that the residence bill was a reality and that the national capital city was in progress of being located on the Potomac. So Daniel Carroll and Dr. Stuart, two of the commissioners, with Mr. Ellicott, proceeded to the spot. "By neglect or accident," observes a chronicler of the occasion, "the inhabitants were not apprized of their coming, and therefore had not the opportunity of executing fully that plan of operation which their interest in the business and their respect for the commissioners had previously suggested."[1]

The officials were met at Mr. Wise's Tavern at three o'clock in the afternoon by the mayor and the officers of the city, and

[1] *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, April 26, 1791. Date line, Alexandria, April 21.

after drinking a toast, a procession was formed, headed by the town sergeant, and composed of the Alexandria Masonic Lodge and citizens. After the stone was laid by the Masons, an address was delivered by Rev. James Muir, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Alexandria. The company then returned to Mr. Wise's Tavern, where a number of toasts were drunk. Recognition was given of a strong element in the current sentiment of the day relative to the permanent seat, by the toast offered by the master of the masonic lodge that expressed the hope, "May jealousy, that green-eyed monster, be buried deep under the work which we have this day completed, never to rise again within the federal district." [1] The activity displayed in the work of the city during the opening months and the rapidity with which things were done is shown by the fact that this first corner-stone laying occurred in about two weeks from the time the agreement had been reached with the landowners. It is quite evident the disagreement which had developed over the area of the city was of sufficient character to warrant the exercise of great judgment and tact in bringing about a settlement. Only five of the nineteen signers of the agreement made a formal protest, and it is not known whether or not they represented all the protestants. At any rate, in their number were included Robert

[1] The stone placed there at that time was a temporary one, and in June, 1794, a large stone was substituted for it with the lettering, "The beginning of the Territory of Columbia." The other stones, placed at an interval of a mile apart and for the greater part still in place, are of sandstone one foot square and four feet in height, two above ground, with bevelled top. On one side are cut the words, "Jurisdiction of the United States," with the distance in miles and the number of the stone. On the opposite side is the word "Maryland" or "Virginia" and the year 1792, with also a record of the magnetic variations. The lines were cleared forty feet wide.

A description of the stones and their location, with many photographic illustrations, is to be found in papers by Marcus Baker and Fred E. Woodward, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vols. 1 and 10.

In a certificate dated Jan. 1, 1793, nearly two years after beginning the survey, Ellicott described the work that he had done on the District boundary and announced its completion as well as that of a map of the territory. Andrew Ellicott, His Life and Letters. By Catherine V. Mathews, p. 95, New York, 1908.

Peter, entitled to the distinction of leading citizen, Notley Young, probably the third largest owner of land within the proposed limits of the city, Uriah Forrest, who entertained the president at dinner while he was in Georgetown negotiating with the landowners, Benjamin Stoddert, one of Washington's confidential agents in the preliminary negotiations, and James M. Lingan, whom Washington had just appointed surveyor of the newly organized office of the port of Georgetown.

Of the four property holders who took sides with Washington as set forth in the counter protest, two of them were newly interested in the city; namely, George Walker, a Scotchman and a merchant in Philadelphia,[1] and Samuel Davidson of Annapolis, Md.

It was evidently thought best to hasten the survey of the city and to fix definitely upon the boundary lines, and so Ellicott was called in from his work on the bounds of the ten-mile square.[2]

Under date of June 30, 1791, the commissioners wrote to the property holders to give such information as they have in regard to the lines of their land "to Major L'Enfant and Major Ellicott" for the general plat of the city, which indicates that Ellicott was also then engaged in the survey of the city. One of the marginal notes on the map of L'Enfant, which was retained on the engraved map, much to the chagrin of L'Enfant, especially as the legend on the map ending with the words "By Charles P. L'Enfant" was omitted, stated "that in order

[1] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 156. Allen C. Clark, Washington, 1901.

[2] "Georgetown, June 4. On Saturday last, Mr. Ellicott, the geographer general of the United States, completed six main lines of the federal city. He is now engaged in clearing and bounding the lines of the district of ten miles square." *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, June 10, 1791.

"I hope to-morrow will prove more favorable for me to proceed laying down those posts which you prescribe in the letter which I this moment receive from Mr. Ellicott, who brought it himself to me and shall, according to your direction, join his endeavor with mine in running as much as possible of the water course as may serve to connect the whole of our different surveys together." L'Enfant to Jefferson, Georgetown, May 10, 1791. State Department, D. C., Papers.

to execute the above plan Mr. Ellicott drew a true meridional line" so that Ellicott's name alone appeared on the map.[1]

To provide a city fund and to be able to pay the advances made for the expenses of the surveyors, which in the case of the boundary work done by Mr. Ellicott also involved furnishing tents and the outlay for camp life, an order was drawn early in April upon the treasurer of the western shore of Maryland for the first instalment of $24,000, or one third of the donation promised by that state. The next month Virginia was sufficiently in funds to honor orders drawn by the commissioners.[2]

John M. Gantt, who was one of the trustees named in the deed of trust that was finally signed by the land holders, was chosen at this time by the board of commissioners as secretary of the board, while William Deakins, Jr., was made treasurer. The secretary received a salary, while the treasurer was allowed a compensation of 1 per cent upon all monies paid by him. He was required to give a bond of 10,000 pounds.[3]

The presence and voice of Washington were again required before the property holders yielded. He spent over two days in the city in June, and on the last day of his stay, on the 30th of June, the commissioners were able to record the names of fourteen property holders who had signed deeds transferring their property to trustees for the purposes named in the trust. In this list are to be found the names of all the protesting property owners.[4]

[1] This legend from the engraved map is quoted in the earliest description of the city in book form in an appendix to the second edition of an "Oration on the Discovery of America," delivered in London, Oct. 12, 1792, by Elhanan Winchester, and printed in that city with an engraved plan of Washington.

[2] Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI, April, 1791. Also Proceedings of Commissioners, May 9, 1791.

[3] Proceedings of Commissioners, June 30, 1791. Mr. Gantt served the corporation of Georgetown in the office of recorder from 1789 to 1809.

[4] The deeds of trust executed by Robert Peter, Notley Young, Benjamin Stoddert, James Pierce, Anthony Holmead, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, James M. Lingan, David Burnes, Jonathan Slater, Samuel Davidson, William Young, Abraham Young, Charles Beatty, Clement Woodward and George Walker were lodged in the care of the com-

A comparison of the names of landowners to the agreement of March 30, with those attached to the deeds of June 30, shows that during that interval of three months a good deal of land had changed hands.[1] The speculation in land, feared by Washington, began at the inception of the city and continued with increasing volume for several years. The proceedings of the commissioners give some of these speculative transactions. For example, it is stated that a tract of 500 acres owned by John Waring of Prince George County, Md., represented in the agreement by Benjamin Stoddert, was bought by William Bagley for himself and for Benjamin Stoddert, Philip Richard Fendall, Uriah Forrest and William Deakins, Jr.

The names of Samuel Davidson, Clement Woodward and George Walker appear as landowners for the first time in the list of those who signed deeds. An agreement was also recorded by Jonathan Slater relative to land he had contracted to buy from John Prout.

Another but later list of proprietors of lands within the city is found in a letter dated Georgetown, March 9, 1792, written by Uriah Forrest to Major L'Enfant, sending him a testimonial which he states is signed by all the proprietors with the exception of two, and it may be concluded that the two names needed to bring the list up to fifteen are those of Daniel Carroll and Notley Young. All the names of those signing deeds June 30 are found in this later list with the exception of the two

missioners and directed by them to be recorded in the general court records. Proceedings of Commissioners, June 29, 1791.

[1] A fairly complete list of the owners of the land within the area selected for the city before the location was announced can be made up from the names of the nine owners given in a previous chapter and from the four names not included in that list attached to the paper sent to President Washington in the fall of 1790, offering property in the vicinity of Georgetown. This list of thirteen of the nineteen signers of the March agreement is as follows: Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Notley Young, David Burnes, Robert Peter, Anthony Holmead, Benjamin Stoddert, James M. Lingan, William Young, Abraham Young, Thomas Beall of George, William Deakins, Jr., Uriah Forrest and George Beall.

named above and the following: James Pierce, Anthony Holmead, Jonathan Slater, William Young, Charles Beatty and Clement Woodward.[1]

At this conference in June Washington was able to show a partially completed sketch by L'Enfant of the plan for the city, and no doubt that had an influence upon the views of the property owners.

"But the moment he [Washington] appeared, all difficulties vanished," states the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, July 5, 1791. "Instead of Washington's plans being thwarted, as had been anticipated, the landowners resigning all narrow considerations cheerfully entered into the necessary business of making the proper conveyances, which being completed to the utmost wishes of the president, he then submitted to the inspection of the proprietors and a large number of gentlemen attending the plan of the city, which had for several weeks occupied the attention and talents of Colonel L'Enfant, assisted by the Baron de Graff, and which with some small alterations he had determined to adopt.

"By this plan and the president's explanation, it appears that the buildings for the legislature are to be placed on Jenkin's Hill on the land of Daniel Carroll, Esq. of Duddington, about two miles from Rock Creek, and about one and a quarter from the Eastern Branch, and that the houses of the president and for the great departments are to be situated on the rising ground adjoining Hamburg within one mile of Georgetown and about one and a quarter from the houses of legislation, an arrangement which afforded the most general approbation, satisfying each interested individual." [2]

In submitting to the president what he called "the general map — an incomplete drawing only correct as to the situation and distance of objects," L'Enfant, under date of June 22,

[1] Forrest to L'Enfant. Coll. Hist. Soc., pp. 136–138, Vol. 2.

[2] In a few years a bitter controversy sprang up relative to the grouping of the department buildings about the president's house, it being maintained that the original understanding was that they were to be located near the capitol.

1791, gave an account of the scope of his plan and an explanation of its principal features.[1]

This report is merely an amplified form of some of the marginal descriptive notes in the existing manuscript plan which in its main features was evidently given shape at this time. Changes were made, but it is concluded the general scheme was not altered. This plan came to be known as "the large plan," "the original plan," and unlike the one that has been preserved, contained the numbers of the squares.[2] L'Enfant explained in this letter to Washington that his "whole attention was given to the combination of the general distribution of the grand local"; that is, to interpret the thought thus obscurely expressed, owing to the use of a language foreign to the writer, he had devoted his time to a general study of the site and to devising a plan for its most effective treatment and use. He tells something of his method. "Having first determined some principal point," he states, "to which I wished making the rest subordinate, I next made the distribution regular with streets at right angles, north-south and east-west. But afterwards I opened others in various directions as avenues to and from every principal place, wishing by this not merely to contrast with the general regularity nor to afford a greater variety of pleasant seats and prospects, . . . but principally to connect each part of the city with more efficacy by, if I may so express, making the real distance less from place to place."

It is also apparent that L'Enfant originated the idea of bringing the post-road, the main artery between the north and the south, through the city; at least he explains in this report that several of the avenues provided in his plan were necessary to connect with the "out roads," as he terms them, specifying

[1] L'Enfant to Washington. War Department Manuscripts. Also Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 32, Vol. 2.

[2] Andrew Ellicott to the Commissioners, Oct. 13, 1792. Commissioners' Letter Book. The only existing L'Enfant plan was first printed in 1887 by the Coast and Geodetic Survey for use by the government in the suit known as the Potomac Flats Case and was admitted in evidence as L'Enfant's plan of the city.

the Bladensburg Road and the Eastern Branch Road. The connecting link through the city in the case of the first-named road was Maryland Avenue in its eastern section as shown in the Ellicott topographical map of the District, and in the case of the second, Pennsylvania Avenue. It will be recalled, in his first account of the proposed city plan, a bridge over the Eastern Branch and one over the Potomac just above Georgetown were to provide for the continuance of the eastern and western ends of Pennsylvania Avenue into the adjoining country of Maryland and Virginia. One of the first things done by the commissioners was to bring the Bladensburg Road through the city by opening Maryland Avenue.[1]

"After much menutial [sic] search for an eligible situation," continues L'Enfant in his report, "prompted, I may say, from a fear of being prejudiced in favor of a first opinion, I could discover no one so advantageously to greet the congressional building as is that on the west end of Jenkin's Heights," and then adds in fine phrase, "which stands as a pedestal waiting for a monument."[2]

L'Enfant named in this report as the site of the "presidential palace," a term which originated with him and was used during

[1] The post-road between the north and the south at that time was the Bladensburg Road that ran along the ridge of the hills, not descending into the plain where the city was built until Florida Avenue and 7th Street was reached. A southern spur of the road crossing the original bounds of the city at Maryland Avenue and 15th Street, N. E. passed just to the west of the Eastern Branch to the ferry at the foot of 14th Street E. The new section of the road provided by the city builders followed the present line of Maryland Avenue to a point, it is conjectured, quite near the site of the capitol, then bending slightly to the north and passing over Tiber Creek at the ford and continuing west and north to what was known as the F Street ridge. The continuation of the road west of 15th Street was probably in part along what is now Pennsylvania Avenue and thence along K Street and over the bridge spanning Rock Creek, which the commissioners built, the one erected several years before by the Georgetown authorities on the line of M Street being in ruins.

[2] A few weeks earlier John Trumbull, the portrait painter, arrived in Georgetown from a southern journey and rode with L'Enfant "over the ground on which the city has since been built: where the Capitol now stands was then a thick wood." Autobiography of John Trumbull, p. 106. New Haven, 1841.

the early years by the commissioners in referring to the president's house, "the ridge which attracted your attention at the first inspection of the ground [probably referring to Washington's visit in the previous March] on the west side of the Tiber entrance." The department buildings he placed near to the president's house and on the way leading to the capitol, and, after speaking of the view of the river with Alexandria in the distance as an advantage to the location chosen for the president's residence, he shows an artist's appreciation of noble surroundings by pointing out the connection between the gardens and park provided as a setting for the executive mansion with the public walk and the avenues to the capitol. He also outlines his plan of having the waters of the Tiber "issuing from under the base of the congress building may then form a cascade of forty feet height or more than one hundred feet wide, which would produce the most happy effect in falling down to fill up the canal and discharge itself in the Patowmack." He also refers to the proposed location of an equestrian statue of Washington, voted by the continental congress in 1783, on the site now occupied by the Washington monument.

From this description which was written to accompany the plan itself, it would be almost possible to reproduce his drawing, if the original had been lost.

In addition to harmonizing the variant views of the land holders and examining the progress made in preparing a plan for laying out the city, which, as stated, was in such a forward condition that it was shown to the property holders in June, 1791, Washington also decided to begin at once to realize on the real estate just acquired, by having a public sale of lots to be held on the 14th of the following October. The terms fixed upon were a deposit at the time of the sale of 8 per cent of the purchase price, the balance secured in bonds to be paid in three equal annual instalments.[1] A month before the sale, however, the cash payment required was looked upon as too small, and 25 per cent instead of 8 was required.

On the date decided upon for the sale of lots, the commis-

[1] Proceedings of the Commissioners, June 30, 1791.

sioners also asked for proposals for building the canal shown on the plan to connect James Creek that had its source south of Capitol Hill and emptied into the Eastern Branch, just east of Greenleaf's Point, with the Tiber which flowed on the west at the base of that elevation. By providing a connecting link between these two interior waterways, it was believed the trade of the new city would be benefited.

The early mention of this proposed improvement gives further emphasis to the contemporary estimate of the value of the Eastern Branch as a harbor and a place of trade.[1] The canal formed of the Tiber as far east as 3d Street, W. and then a link connecting with the James Creek, as well as what L'Enfant called "an additional branch" that led off from it to a point on the Eastern Branch just west of the Navy Yard, was shown on the city plan as exhibited, June 30, by Washington to the property holders, as is established by a reference to the canal by L'Enfant in a letter to Washington dated some six weeks after the latter's visit to the city.[2] This letter is highly characteristic showing the ardor of an artist for his conception, which, in this case, had already taken form. The scope of L'Enfant's idea of the city was not merely to devise a system of streets and avenues suited to the needs of a city that was to be the capital of a small country, but one to meet the needs when the United States should become populous and powerful.

It was to be a grand centre of a great nation, and in order that his plan, which he notes in this letter with gratitude has met with the approbation of Washington, may be carefully matured, he urges that, instead of at once disposing of the city's property in the lots, a loan be made, and with the money thus secured he proposed to carry out fully his scheme, which included not only a picturesque and attractive arrangement of thoroughfares varied with gardens and parks and the flash

[1] Ellicott speaks of the latter as "one of the best harbors in the country." Ellicott's observations on the sale of city lots. Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2201. War Department Manuscripts.

[2] L'Enfant to Washington, Aug. 19, 1791. Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2193. War Department Manuscripts.

and play of waters, but also the placing of the public buildings designed and located with reference to their surroundings.

Then when the city is supplied with stately public edifices, he urges, will be the time to allow private individuals to acquire land within its limits and to erect buildings for residence and business, under such restrictions that they shall harmonize with the surroundings. It may be imagined how such a vision, it might almost be called, how such a dream city, would be regarded by the men of that day, who were bending their energies to the rude work of subduing to the uses of civilization the unbroken forests and the virgin meadows of a new country.

To that generation and even to the mind of Washington, who had the breadth of view that determined him to plan a city for the future and not merely for the present, and which led him to provide an ample area and to accept L'Enfant's elaborate scheme of city planning, the practical thing to do was to realize at the earliest moment on the appeal to the imagination of an opportunity to buy lots in a town site selected as the national centre of a country of such boundless possibilities. There is no question but that Washington and his associates believed that a prompt sale would yield a golden return.

As the first conflict between the imaginative mind of L'Enfant and the practical needs of financing the new city, and as the beginning of what proved to be an irrepressible conflict, to end, not in compromise, but in a fight to the finish, this letter of L'Enfant's is illuminating. At the time it made apparently no impression, for, as Washington afterwards said, he did not believe L'Enfant would be "so tenacious of his plans." But, as the sequel proved, L'Enfant was in dead earnest as to his ideas, and also determined that they were to be carried out in his own way.

His reference to his plan as "wholly new" is a judgment which the passage of years has not changed. At that time L'Enfant was having the assistance of Benjamin Ellicott, a brother of Andrew Ellicott, and speaks of him as being most

indispensable to complete the work begun "as it is necessary to have a number of lots for houses measured and marked." [1] L'Enfant was apparently conforming his ideas to those of Washington, at least in regard to placing the property at once on the market. The commissioners, by order of Oct. 6, 1791, instructed Mr. Ellicott (apparently Andrew Ellicott) to lay off lots in readiness for the coming sale in the squares about the sites where the capitol and president's house were to be built and also on the Eastern Branch and about Hamburg.

Six weeks after Washington left Georgetown with harmony restored, L'Enfant presented him with the plan "altered agreeably to your directions." [2] The date line of L'Enfant's letter of transmission is Georgetown, August 19, but in a letter to the commissioners dated August 28, Jefferson states that, "Major L'Enfant having also arrived here and laid the plan of the Federal city before the President," which leads to the inference that he took the plan in person to Philadelphia. The president had not as yet given his approval to the plan, and as there were other questions relative to the new city raised by the commissioners, the president arranged to call in the counsel of men about him.[3] As a result of this conference, Mr. Jefferson records that he and Mr. Madison, as they were to pass through Georgetown on their way to Virginia, at the suggestion of the president would meet with the commissioners and communicate to them the sentiments expressed at the conference and approved by the president. Such a meeting was arranged to take place early in September. In the same general language Jefferson reports to Washington, under date of Georgetown, Sept. 8, 1791, that he and Madison met with the commissioners, "who agreed to the various things proposed at the conference in Philadelphia." [4]

[1] L'Enfant to Washington, Aug. 19, 1791. Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2193. War Department Manuscripts.

[2] The same.

[3] Jefferson to the Commissioners, Philadelphia, Aug. 28, 1791. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[4] Letters to Washington. Incidentally Jefferson notes a further action taken which, as it carried out one of his own ideas, no doubt

Nine years later in a memorial to congress on the subject of his claim for remuneration for his services, L'Enfant says that alterations were made in the plan as early as August, 1791, by his own hand at the recommendation of the president and Mr. Jefferson and that these changes comprised the suppression of several lines of avenues. Such changes, he adds, were made in the plan before it was submitted to Washington in Philadelphia in the latter part of August. He further states that "the engraved plan is agreeable to the original lines of the grand division of the city." [1] In L'Enfant's letter of Aug. 18, 1791, occurs the first mention of his scheme of reservations in addition to those designed for governmental and ornamental uses. The latter are fully set forth in the marginal notes of the plan which has been preserved, and that circumstance might indicate that the notes were at that time on the plan. According to L'Enfant's description, sites were to be set aside for the local courts, national bank, national church, market, exchange and theatre.

An effort was made to have a reduced drawing of the plan engraved for use at the first sale of lots to be held October 17, so that those who attended might know the position of the property to be sold. L'Enfant spent some time in Philadelphia preparing a drawing suitable for the engraver. On the 9th of September the commissioners wrote to him that, having named the city and the District, "the title of the map will therefore be a map of the city of Washington in the Territory of Columbia." He was also informed that the streets, which are 80 to 110 feet in width, are to be "named alphabetically one way

was specially interesting to him; namely, an agreement as to a building regulation that the walls of houses on the avenues were to be exactly thirty-five feet high and none to be higher in any other part of the city.

[1] Memorial to the Senate and the House, Philadelphia, Dec. 7, 1800. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 100, Vol. 1. There is no further record that will throw light on the personnel of this conference on the city plan or of what, if any, changes were agreed upon. The most direct testimony is the statement of L'Enfant that the changes suggested by the president when he saw the plan in the new city the last of June had been made when the plan was submitted in the following August.

and numerically the other; the former divided into north and south letters, the latter into east and west numbers from the Capitol." Major Ellicott, he was told, would furnish him the soundings of the Eastern Branch, which he was to insert in the map, and also Ellicott was expected to furnish him with the direction of the proposed post-road, to be noticed in the map. It was desired that 10,000 copies be struck off.[1] No reference is made in this letter or elsewhere to the naming of the avenues, that were laid out from 130 to 160 feet wide. The names are not on the L'Enfant map that has been preserved, but are on the engraved plan. Fifteen of these thoroughfares, with the exception of Georgia Avenue, changed to Potomac Avenue, had the same designations as they have to-day; namely, that of the various states which up to the year 1792 had come into the union. In after years the avenues on the map without names were designated as follows: Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana and Indiana.

But in spite of evident pressure, the business of the engraving of the map dragged, and in consequence the engraved copies were not available for use at the first sale of lots, as had been confidently expected by the president and the commissioners. What the expectations were is shown in part by a resolution adopted by the commissioners as late as September 24, three weeks before the date of the sale instructing Major L'Enfant to send copies of the engraved plan to such parts in the northern states as he might think proper. One explanation of the failure is given in a letter of Tobias Lear to Washington.[2] He learned from the engraver, he states, who was "to print a map of the city," that in addition to not being able to get the copper for the plate, "that the draft he had in his possession was so incorrect that it would be highly improper to engrave from it, and that there was no possibility of remedying this, but by having the large draft which Major L'Enfant had carried with him to the Federal City."

Two days later Lear informs Washington that in order to

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book.
[2] Letters to Washington, Oct. 9, 1791.

gratify some persons who wished to see the plat of the federal city, "I got from the engraver a draft which Major L'Enfant had left in his hands (not the reduced one for the plate) and which he said could be of no manner of use to him. This, though the engraver says it is not accurate, serves to give a good general idea of the spot and plan of the city." [1] L'Enfant's explanation of the same circumstances and also of the three drawings of the plan referred to by Mr. Lear is to be found in a letter which he wrote a few months later when his struggle for supremacy in the affairs of the city had ended with his enforced retirement from all connection with that undertaking.[2]

He states he did not have in his possession, when he was in Philadelphia, the results of the survey in the city done by Benjamin Ellicott, "which I intended to make the basis of the drawing of the remainder from the original plan and upon a reduced scale for engraving." Desiring, he adds, "to comply with the president's wish in obtaining as soon as possible that engraving, finally determined me to request the assistance of Mr. Benjamin Ellicott, who, though not professional in drawing, I conceived to be the most proper person to prepare the work in that part, more especially which himself and Mr. Roberdeau had with accuracy laid down upon the ground — the more to facilitate this I gave him the sketch which you had taken from the former undertaker of the plate, begging him to finish as much as he could in pencil, only without the assistance of a large map which I had at that time in use and by which we together would correct and complete the whole."

What Washington thought of the failure to have the map engraved was expressed in a letter written after the sale, in which he said, "There has been something very unaccountable in the conduct of the engraver, yet I cannot be of the opinion that the delays were occasioned by L'Enfant." [3]

[1] Letters to Washington, Oct. 9, 1791.

[2] L'Enfant to Tobias Lear, Philadelphia, Feb. 17, 1792. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 144, Vol. 2.

[3] Washington to David Stuart, Philadelphia, Nov. 20, 1791. Potomac Flats Case, Record, Vol. 7, p. 2205. State Department, D.C., Papers.

This "large map" or "general map" or "original map," as L'Enfant on different occasions speaks of it, was the ostensible cause of the beginning of the breach in his relations with the commissioners which rapidly widened. It seems that, not having an engraved map to show prospective buyers at the sale, the commissioners requested L'Enfant to allow his map to be exhibited. This he refused, and his action was made the subject of complaint on the part of Dr. Stuart in a letter to Washington, October 29. The president, in his reply,[1] shows that he understood the shortcomings and faults of a man of L'Enfant's talents and temperament, who, he said, "was better qualified than any one who had come within my knowledge in this country or indeed in any other, the probability of obtaining whom could be counted upon . . . for prosecuting public works and carrying them into effect." He admits that he did not expect to meet "with such perverseness" as L'Enfant's late conduct exhibited, for while he knew he would be "tenacious of his plans as to conceive they would be marred if they underwent any change or alteration, but I did not suppose he would interfere further in the mode of selling lots than by giving his opinion with his reasons in support of it."

Washington's estimate of L'Enfant's professional attainments is given in the same letter. He regarded him not only as a scientific man, but one who added considerable taste to professional knowledge. He stated that he had given L'Enfant to understand that he must in the future look to the commissioners for directions. The president urges expedition in having the plan engraved "as soon as a correct draught" is prepared, "because I have understood that Mr. Ellicott has given it as his opinion it was lucky that engravings did not come out from the first plan inasmuch as they would not have been so perfectly exact as to have justified a sale by them."

In urging despatch in the business of the city, the president states, he does not wish it to be inferred that such advice proceeds from any doubt he harbors that the enemies to the measure can shake the establishment of it. "For it is with pleasure

[1] Nov. 20, 1791. State Department, D.C., Papers.

I add as my opinion that the roots of the permanent seat are penetrating deep and spreading far and wide." He notes that the eastern states are getting more reconciled to it, but he points out that the "irreconcilables will continue to aim all the side blows in their power." To the latter he attributes the rumors spread at the sale that congress would never reside there.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DIFFICULTIES WITH L'ENFANT

THE failure to have engraved plans in readiness for the advertised sale of lots to begin Oct. 17, 1791, the rumors industriously circulated by the enemies of the location that the government would never remove there and the refusal of L'Enfant to allow "the map of the federal city" to be exhibited at the sale were not the only adverse factors. When the appointed day arrived, the weather was such that the prospective buyers could not meet on the ground.[1]

It is probable the auctioneer, James McKenna, conducted the sale at the Fountain Inn of John Suter near the foot of Wisconsin Avenue, as the latter was duly paid a bill "for wine and wood furnished at the sale of lots."[2] The importance of the occasion was enhanced by the presence of Washington, who was there on the first day, and with him were Jefferson and Madison.[3] But of the others who attended there is no record except the general observation of Commissioner Stuart that "the chief purchasers yesterday and the day before were from the westward. I was happy to find to-day that they were intermixed with purchasers from Carolina and Norfolk."[4] As the result of the auction which came to an end on the third day, "as the business seemed

[1] "The weather has been much against us," writes Dr. Stuart to Washington at the close of the last of the three days the sale was continued. "Could we have been on the ground and exhibited a general plan, I believe it would have aided the sales considerably." Letters to Washington. A plat, however, was displayed of the portion of the city where the lots offered for sale were located. Proceedings of Commissioners, April 17, 1795.

[2] The same.

[3] Washington's Letters, Oct. 17, 1791.

[4] The same.

to flag a little to-day" (Oct. 19),[1] thirty-five lots were sold, yielding an aggregate of $8756 to the funds of the city, but in actual cash a little more than $2000, if all the purchasers availed themselves of the terms of sale, the balance of the money being in deferred payments. All the lots sold were in the vicinity of the president's house, although Ellicott had been instructed to lay off lots in readiness for the sale in the squares near the president's house, the capitol, on the Eastern Branch and near Hamburg.[2] It is possible that only the portion of his task in the vicinity of the president's house was completed in time, which may account for the transactions at the first public auction being confined to that locality. There is hardly a word of comment on record as to the result of this first effort to realize on the most important asset which the enterprise had at its command. A week later Washington expressed himself hopefully in his reference to the new city in the course of the message to congress, when he said, "there is a prospect, favored by the rate of sales which have already taken place, of ample funds for carrying on the necessary public buildings. There is every expectation of their due progress." At any rate, he did not wish to give comfort to the enemies of the enterprise by expressing any lack of confidence at the very outset. He may have had in mind, too, the sales of lands within the city limits owned by individuals, and there is evidence that quite a brisk business was done.

But at this distance of time, the sale of thirty-one lots, with a total cash payment of some $2000, seems rather inadequate compared with what was to be done. Dr. Stuart told Washington "that the general opinion is the lots have gone too high."[3] The highest price paid for a lot, and the standard lot was estimated to contain 5265 square feet and 50 feet front, was $534, and the lowest was $162, although several lots were sold for a few dollars less, but as Dr. Stuart explained to his chief,

[1] Washington's Letters, Oct. 17, 1791.
[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Oct. 6, 1791.
[3] The same.

"You will understand that they are all actual sales, excepting about four among the lowest," so that it is evident the commissioners stepped in to prevent the property going lower than the level agreed upon.[1]

The low limit was evidently at that time about $160 per lot, and as it was determined, later on when the ground had been surveyed, that there were some ten thousand lots belonging to the public, the value of the property would on such a basis reach an aggregate of $1,600,000. It was soon realized in the affairs of the city, the difference between an estimated and a real value, especially as the latter was determined by conditions over which the commissioners had no control and could not foresee, as, for example, the depressing influence upon business and the stringency in the money market caused by the disturbed and uncertain situation in France which, in the fall of 1791, had not as yet reached an acute stage. As will be seen as the narrative proceeds, the development of the city in the early years was much retarded by the unfavorable condition of trade, amounting almost to a panic that marked the period leading up to the general war which soon convulsed the whole of Europe.[2]

At that period the "ad" writer was not much of a factor in the development of enterprises dependent upon the coöperation of the public, but it seems that something of the method of a later day may be traced in an article that appeared in the *Maryland Journal*, Sept. 30, 1791, more than two weeks before the time fixed for the sale of lots. This article has a further

[1] A contemporary estimate of values in the new city is found in a request of Tobias Lear to L'Enfant to buy for him a lot at the sale "provided the price should not exceed $500." Lear to L'Enfant, Philadelphia, Oct. 12, 1791. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 133, Vol. 2.

[2] "You have certainly heard of the extraordinary crush which has taken place here, at New York and Boston, of persons dealing in paper and of good merchants and others who had dealings with paper men. It has produced general stagnation of money contracts which will continue until it is known who stands and who falls during this crisis." Jefferson to Commissioners, Philadelphia, April 20, 1792. War Department Manuscripts. Potomac Flats Case, p. 2213, Record, Vol. 7.

interest, as it is the first printed account of the city. "The plan," it was stated, "was designed and drawn by the celebrated Major L'Enfant, and is an inconceivable improvement upon all other cities in the world, combining not only convenience, regularity, elegance of prospect and a free circulation of air, but everything grand and beautiful that can possibly be introduced into a city." The writer declares that the plan "will not only produce amazement in Europe, but meet the admiration of all future ages."

There is nothing to indicate a feeling of discouragement at this time among those interested actively in the new city. In fact, all the official acts pointed to a belief that the enterprise was to be successful. One that may be cited was the issue of building regulations, a municipal function conferred on the commissioners by the Maryland legislature. In this instance the president of the United States was mentioned as joining with the commissioners in their preparation and promulgation, which illustrates the closeness of attention given by Washington to city affairs.[1] The conference held in Georgetown with the commissioners on the occasion of the visit of Jefferson and Madison included the subject of the regulations for building. At that time the commissioners decided upon the rules which were formally promulgated Oct. 17, 1791. This action gave official sanction to the idea that building operations were expected and that the new city was not merely to be the scene of speculative land operations or of the erection of buildings for the use of the government.

The regulations in the requirements as to the character of the buildings to be erected were unusual in that day. The new structures were not only to be substantial, but were to be harmonious. For only brick and stone were to be used, and no building was to be higher than forty feet, and on the avenues lower than thirty-five feet, thus ensuring a sky-line that would

[1] Jefferson to Washington, dated Georgetown, Sept. 8, 1791, giving answers to certain questions in Washington's handwriting relating to the building regulations and other details which had been prepared for this conference. Washington Papers. Sparks Index Series, Vol. 76, p. 409.

be pleasing. This latter provision, for the first time attempted outside of the continent of Europe, was suggested by Jefferson as early as the preceding fall, who states that he was pleased with the results of such a system in Paris.[1]

Party walls were allowed and vaults beneath the streets were prohibited, and both of these provisions were probably derived from the building code of Philadelphia.[2] There were to be no frame buildings in the city except for temporary uses, and this restriction continued to be a part of the regulations until the year 1796. A building line was established and provision was made for applications for permits by those proposing to build to the person appointed by the commissioners to superintend the buildings within the city.

The date of the first sale of lots also marks the beginning of the independent career of the city or rather its control by the commissioners. For while these officials seldom undertook anything of consequence without first consulting the president, yet from this time they were the ostensible source of all power and authority, and the president ceased taking the initiative, as he had done up to this time.

The commissioners, being men of consequence and appointed to their present position largely because of their personal relations with the president, were disposed from the outset to look upon their duties as mainly supervisory. For the first two years they served without pay.[3] They had no regular time for meeting, but came together as the business seemed to require and as the state of the roads permitted. At the outset the meetings did not average more than one a month. The first sale of lots was preceded only by a little more than

[1] Jefferson's notes on the residence bill. State Department, D.C., Papers. Potomac Flats Case, Vol. 7, p. 2155.

[2] Origin of the Building Regulations. Appleton P. Clark, Jr. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 4.

[3] In January, 1793, an allowance of $1000 was given to each commissioner to defray expenses incurred in the discharge of his official duties during his services which up to that time had lasted about two years. From that date a salary of $1600 per year was fixed as the compensation of each member of the board. Proceedings of Commissioners, March 4, 1793.

three months by the final agreement with the property holders, so that necessarily up to June 30, 1791, not much had been done in the way of the actual work of city building. It is probable with the exception of the removal of trees in order to enable the surveyors to run their lines over a locality that was at that time said to be quite thickly wooded, but few changes had been made in the appearance of the farms or plantations that comprised the site of the federal city. One of the property holders, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, who was living in his farmhouse near Greenleaf's Point, began the erection of a house south of the site of the capitol, and it was far enough advanced so that "in 1790 the cellar of his house was walled up and stood the winter." It is evident he started the building soon after Washington's visit to the locality in the fall of 1790.[1]

To the owners of land within the chosen area, the signs of the coming change were first visible, and they early became familiar with a phase of the situation that for the time made the city a centre of speculative activity. The names of some of the newcomers are to be found by comparing the list of those who signed the agreement March 30, with those of June 30 who executed deeds of trust. The name of Samuel Blodgett, who became a prominent figure in the affairs of the city during the first few years is not to be found in either list as he and other adventurers, as they were called, acquired their holdings later on.

The shadow of coming events and of the changes that were to transform a farming region into a city that was to be the governmental centre of the United States must have been more apparent in Georgetown than in any portion of the District, for that place was from the beginning a base of supplies for the city builders. Here was the office of the surveying force.[2]

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Jan. 8, 1792.

[2] Statement of Isaac Briggs, Jan. 12, 1793. "When we [referring to Ellicott] were running the bounding lines of the territory of Columbia, being obliged to transact (as I have understood) the general business of his office in Georgetown." Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 184, Vol. 2. In the same volume, pp. 139–142, is an affidavit of L'Enfant and a letter of Samuel Davidson relative to the papers taken from L'Enfant's office which indicate that it was located in Georgetown.

For the first five years the office of the commissioners remained in the town west of Rock Creek, and there is also where they lived. As early as the spring of 1792, the commissioners had concluded to erect a building for their use "near the place called the Church Square," [1] where the patent office building now stands. But this was not done. The location of the office in Georgetown is unknown. Tradition has fixed upon the two-story structure at 3049 M Street as the headquarters of the surveying department of the city in the year 1791, and a tablet was placed on the walls in the year 1899 by the Hiram Ripley Society, D. A. R., bearing the inscription "Gen. Washington's headquarters while surveying the city of Washington in 1791." A similar indefiniteness exists in regard to the location of the commissioner's office after its removal to Washington in the year 1796.

At the outset both the president and the commissioners looked to Major L'Enfant, not only to prepare the plan of the city, but also to design the public buildings and in general to have charge of all building.[2]

As it was known that the clay in the locality was excellent for brick, by the first of October gangs of men were employed in getting out this material for building in the vicinity of the two public buildings and later on kilns were erected there where the brick used in those structures was made.

While the commissioners were getting ready to begin the erection of the public buildings, an incident occurred, slight in itself, but which in its development involved the issue of the resignation either of the commissioners or of L'Enfant, and led

[1] Letter of Daniel Carroll, dated April 16, 1792, to a correspondent whose name has not been preserved. State Department, D.C., Papers.

[2] The commissioners adopted a resolution instructing L'Enfant "to employ on the first Monday of October, 150 laborers to throw up clay at the president's house and the house of congress and in doing such other work connected with the post road and the public buildings as he shall think proper to have immediately executed."

Proceedings of the Commissioners, Sept. 24, 1791. Two days after the close of the public sale of lots on October 21, the commissioners informed Washington that they "have requested Major L'Enfant to prepare a draft of the public buildings for your inspection."

finally to the separation of the latter from the affairs of the city. It seems that Daniel Carroll of Duddington had resumed during the season the building of his new house, which was on the square bounded by E and F streets and 2d Street and New Jersey Avenue, S. E. Just before L'Enfant went to Philadelphia the previous August to lay the plan of the city before the president, he ran the lines of New Jersey Avenue. It was found that the Carroll house extended into the avenue some seven feet. Perhaps the owner was informed and perhaps that was not considered essential by the man in charge of laying out the city, and in his opinion subject to no authority but that of the president, and in the last resort not willing to yield to that. At any rate, on the 17th of November, 1791, the walls of the house were pulled down under the direction of Isaac Roberdeau and Benjamin Ellicott, members of L'Enfant's corps of surveyors. This was done in spite of the commands from the commissioners to desist, and also in spite of an injunction from the chancellor of Maryland which, however, for some reason was not served.

The story of the stormy episode of the Carroll house is told fully in the proceedings and letter books of the commissioners and in Washington's letters. The latter wrote both to L'Enfant and to Daniel Carroll proposing an accommodation. As Mr. Carroll's house was begun before the federal district was fixed upon and it could therefore furnish no precedent, Washington's suggestion was that either the house could be taken down and erected again without cost to the owner or be allowed to stand for six years and then removed without compensation to the owner. But before the letters were received L'Enfant had taken action and the house was down.

Washington above all wanted to avoid the scandal of disagreements among those in charge of the city affairs, as it would only supply material to a vigilant opposition. In addition he recognized that the separation of L'Enfant from the business would be "a serious misfortune. At the same time," as he informs Jefferson, "he [L'Enfant] must know there is a line beyond which he will not be suffered to go. Whether it is

zeal — an impetuous temper, or other motive that leads him into such blameable conduct I will not take upon me to decide, but be it what it will, it must be checked or we shall have no commissioners." In a letter to the commissioners about the same date Washington advises patience with L'Enfant and adds, "I know not where another is to be found who could supply his place."

The calm mediation of Washington and the great personal respect which he inspired no doubt had an influence upon both parties to the controversy; that is, the commissioners and L'Enfant, while Mr. Carroll, who had suffered an actual loss, was solaced by the assurance of ample restitution, which was duly made.[1] At any rate a sort of armed truce was arranged, for it was realized that in addition to the injury to the good name of the enterprise by carrying the controversy to extremes, there was also the consideration of the preparations for bringing out an engraved plan of the city and the completion of the plans of the public buildings, both of which were in L'Enfant's hands. At first it was designed to have the map in readiness, so that the second sale of lots could be held in the coming spring, but as will be seen as the narrative proceeds, L'Enfant either wilfully or constitutionally would or could not act with even reasonable expedition. As his associate, Andrew Ellicott, observed, "The Major has both a lively fancy and decision, but unfortunately no system." [2]

A little more than a month after the sale of lots had been

[1] The sum of $4500 was paid to Daniel Carroll on this account, June 4, 1792. Proceedings of the Commissioners.

[2] Andrew Ellicott to the Commissioners, Feb. 23, 1792. Commissioners' Letter Book. With a more personal touch and an approach to a description of the appearance of L'Enfant which is of special value owing to the lack of any portrait, Ellicott in the course of a letter written in the early days of his association with L'Enfant informs his wife, living in Philadelphia, that he expects L'Enfant "will pay you a visit in my name some time next week. He is a most worthy French gentleman, and though not one of the most handsome of men, he is from his good breeding and native politeness a first-rate favorite among the ladies." Ellicott to his wife, dated Surveyors' Camp, State of Virginia, June 26, 1791. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 174, Vol. 2.

closed, Jefferson wrote to Ellicott, desiring to have "his private opinion of the earliest time at which this portion of the work can be completed." [1]

Jefferson referred to a proposal to have all the squares south of Pennsylvania Avenue, between Rock Creek and the Eastern Branch, first laid off, and as the surveys were completed, the lines were furnished the engravers so that the work of preparing the city map might be hastened in readiness for a sale of lots to be held as soon as possible. In the meantime, and on the 13th of December, 1791, the president sent to congress "the plan of the city," but it is difficult to determine which one of the several copies it is evident L'Enfant had drawn. In an undated statement [2] L'Enfant asserts that a number of drawing copies had been made without his knowledge from "the particular plan and copperplates by me prepared for engraving in the month of August, 1791 in Philadelphia . . . and lodged as in the best place of safety in the hands of the president. But although thus protected," he adds, "a number of drawing copies had been made therefrom without my knowledge such as were in both houses of congress hanging on the walls in December, 1791; others were sent to Europe viz. to Portugal and even to Petersburg in Russia. The commissioners also by means of an agent at Philadelphia, in a surreptitious way procured the aforesaid plan for engraving."

This statement is confused, as was sometimes the case when L'Enfant attempted to express himself in English. He probably referred to the copies of the plan as engraved in October, 1792, and known as the Philadelphia engraved plan, as the ones that were sent to Europe.

As Washington subsequently explained, the plan was sent to congress "as matter of information, and the return of it requested: that it remained as before under the control of the executive," that afterwards "several errors were discovered and corrected, many alterations made, and the appropriations,

[1] Jefferson to Ellicott, Philadelphia, Nov. 21, 1791. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 176, Vol. 2.

[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 148, Vol. 2.

except as to the capitol and the president's house, struck out under that authority before it was sent to the engraver, intending that his work and the promulgation thereof were to give it the final and regulating stamp." [1]

The winter of 1791–1792 was almost passed before apparently it was realized that there was no hope of any progress with L'Enfant in charge except along the lines of his own choice. He had evidently not changed his mind about the advisability of having the plan of the city engraved, and while it seems to have been supposed that preparations to that end were going on in Philadelphia, yet the last month of winter had almost passed before the actual condition was realized and it was discovered that no progress in the engraving was being made.

L'Enfant, in spite of the strained relations with the commissioners growing out of the Carroll house episode, continued in charge of the work in the city. It was during the early portion of the winter that he went to Acquia, Va., and concluded a bargain with George Brent for the purchase of the near-by Higginston Island in the Potomac with its quarry of sandstone. For this property of twelve acres the sum of $3192 was paid, and from there and the stone quarries on Acquia Creek, leased for a period of ten years from George Gibson of Dumfries, the sandstone was taken which was used in the outer walls of the capitol and the president's house and for the stone work in the brick buildings for the use of the executive departments.

Then again in January, 1792, L'Enfant, through his assistant Roberdeau, gave orders for beginning the digging of the foundations for the capitol, which, however, were countermanded by the commissioners, as they naturally thought they should be consulted as to the exact location of that structure.

At this time the Maryland legislature, by an enactment of Dec. 19, 1791, placed on the statute books the first of a series of laws relating to the District; for, in accordance with the organic law, that body remained the law-making power for the Maryland portion of the District "until Congress shall by law other-

[1] Washington to the Commissioners, Feb. 20, 1797. Commissioners' Letter Book.

wise provide," [1] which it did by the law of Feb. 27, 1801. This Maryland act was comprehensive. It gave legal force to the bounds of the District and of the city and gave authority to acquire the lands within the city belonging to minors, persons absent from the state, married women and insane; also allowed foreigners to hold real property, and established an office for the recording of deeds, giving the commissioners authority to appoint a clerk to be in charge of the office. Up to that time the place of record for land transfer in the territory covered by the city was the land office of Prince George County at Marlboro, while the residents of Georgetown and of the section of the District within the bounds of Montgomery County went to the county seat at Rockville and the residents of the Virginia part of the territory had recourse to Alexandria, the county seat of Fairfax County. The commissioners appointed their clerk, John M. Gantt, to be the clerk for recording land deeds, and he continued to perform the duties of both offices until Nov. 1, 1793, when Thomas Johnson, Jr., became the clerk of the board of commissioners or, as he came to sign his name, secretary.[2] The Maryland legislature also in this act provided a lien law "for the encouragement of master builders," so as to make the amounts due on written contracts for building a lien on the property. Certain powers of a minor legislative character were conferred on the commissioners, such as making building regulations, the licensing of the building of wharves and the granting of liquor licenses. In view probably of the expected growth of the population, some of the powers enjoyed only by incorporated towns under the Maryland system were conferred on the commissioners, but in other respects the government of the District, while it continued under the Maryland legislature, resembled closely that of towns not incorporated but merely laid out and where practically all the governmental functions were centred in the county authorities. The taxes were

[1] Act of July 16, 1790.

[2] It is supposed that Mr. Johnson was the son of Commissioner Johnson, but there is not enough known about him to make a positive assertion of that sort. Mr. Johnson subsequently became the first postmaster of the city when the office was established in June 24, 1796.

assessed and collected in the Maryland portion of the District by the authorities of Montgomery and Prince George counties, in whose hands were also the administration of justice, the care of roads, etc.

At the same session of the Maryland legislature the Georgetown Bridge Company, with an authorized capital of about one million dollars, was incorporated to erect a toll bridge over the Potomac River at or near Georgetown. The site finally selected was near the Little Falls. It is reasonable to suppose from the amount of capital stock authorized that the original purpose of the incorporators was to carry out L'Enfant's suggestion and build a bridge at the Three Sisters, just north of the present Aqueduct Bridge. At that time the enterprise did not receive sufficient encouragement to make even a beginning, much less to warrant the erection of such a costly structure as would have been required at that location. It is interesting to note as marking the first appearance of Samuel Blodgett on the scene of the new city that his name appears among the incorporators, the four others being leading Georgetown men, as follows: Robert Peter, William Deakins, Jr., James M. Lingan and Uriah Forrest.

About a month earlier than this session of the Maryland legislature Washington received letters from Thomas Johnson and Dr. David Stuart, commissioners of the city, giving him information in regard to agricultural conditions in and about the District.[1]

Both letters are in answer to requests from Washington for such information. There is nothing to indicate the use Washington made of the facts, if he used them at all. As a contemporary view of the values of the farm lands in the locality and their condition, the letters are highly interesting. Under date of Frederick, Md., Nov. 10, 1791, Mr. Johnson states that the land in Montgomery County, in general, is what may be called of a middling or rather inferior quality. The course pursued commonly in the state is to cultivate the land the first two years in tobacco, the third in Indian corn and then sowed

[1] Washington's Letter Book.

down in wheat. "After this destructive course," he observes, "the land is often again planted the next year with Indian corn and sowed down with wheat or rye without any assistance. The crops accordingly lessen and the land becomes so exhausted as to scarcely pay for ploughing.

"I judge that from one-half to two-thirds of Montgomery County is cleared, a good deal of it is much impoverished or worn out. But a good proportion is capable of improvement.

"Georgetown, a good port for shipping in this county, has, for some years past, been the best market for tobacco in the state, perhaps in America, and the Montgomery tobacco is in high reputation. The labor of the people has heretofore been, I may say, wholly applied in the cultivation of tobacco."

He adds that at Baltimore and Georgetown the surplus wheat is disposed of. "It may not be amiss to remark that as part of the federal district lies within this county and the federal city adjoins it, a great change may be expected to take place in the price of land and the kind of cultivation." The land in Frederick County, he states, is better cared for than in Montgomery County.[1]

Dr. Stuart's letter on the subject of the farming lands in Virginia is dated Hope Park, Fairfax County, Va., November, 1791. He informs Washington that the farming is slovenly and too great dependence is placed on raising corn and tobacco. As the new lands become poor, other lands are cleared. In Fairfax County the land is generally thin and the soil is stiff clay. "Better than half of the county is still in woods. Land at a distance from the river and the town of Alexandria sells

[1] An early mention of a copper and silver mine in the vicinity of the Great Falls is of interest as indicating that the existence of such resources is not a modern discovery. An advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser* of Nov. 17, 1791, offers for sale a tract of land on the great road leading to Leesburg and Winchester, within two and a half miles of the canal at the Great Falls. Adjoining the above is the Mine Tract containing 301 acres, having a valuable and rich copper and silver mine "which was worked within these forty years past and yielded to the satisfaction of the three partners, but by their deaths and other circumstances it has been neglected."

from twenty to forty shillings per acre, while land in no respect superior on the opposite side of the river in Maryland sells from four to five pounds per acre."

The difference in value he accounts for by the greater population in Maryland. "The county of Loudoun," he adds, "is perhaps the best farming county in the state, being thickly populated with Quakers and Germans from Pennsylvania."

There is another account of the country on the south side of the Potomac, written a few months earlier, by Andrew Ellicott. He gives as his judgment from observation while engaged in running the line of the District through that portion of Virginia that "this country intended for the permanent residence of Congress, bears no more proportion to the country about Philadelphia and Germantown, for either wealth or fertility, than a crane does to a stall-fed ox.

"The country through which we are now cutting one of the ten miles is very poor; I think for near seven miles in it, there is not one house that has a floor except the earth, and what is more strange, it is in the neighborhood of Alexandria and Georgetown. . . . As the President is so much attracted to this country I would not be willing that he should know my real sentiments about it." [1]

At last about the middle of February, 1792, the crisis in the L'Enfant affair was reached. It was found that nothing was being done to complete the engraving of the city plan, and when Washington was informed of that fact, he at once instructed Ellicott to get the plan. Then he was told that the engraver would require three months to make the plate and so of course the engraved copies could not be ready for the hoped-for sale of lots in the spring, and it was decided to defer that event until the fall. But the course of L'Enfant meant more than the postponement of the date of the second sale of lots, since it was also the desire to begin at as early a day as possible the erection of the public buildings, and L'Enfant had been depended upon to furnish the plans. "Five months have elapsed and one

[1] Andrew Ellicott to his wife. Surveyors' Camp, State of Virginia, June 26, 1791. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 174, Vol. 2.

lost," writes Washington to L'Enfant, under date of February 28, "by the compliment which was intended to be paid you in depending alone upon your plans for the public buildings instead of advertising a premium to the person who should present the best." [1]

When L'Enfant came to Philadelphia the latter part of December, 1791, Washington pressed him to get the plan ready for engraving. He waited patiently for some six weeks and then directed Ellicott, who was evidently at his home in that city at that season of suspension of out-of-door operations in the new city, to prepare the plan for the engraver.[2]

L'Enfant's account of this circumstance is to be found in a letter written to Lear for the president's information about the time he was relieved by Ellicott. Under date of Feb. 17, 1792, he writes that "I daily attended the progress of the business in all its stages [preparing the map for engraving] until Mr. Andrew Ellicott gave me to understand that he was ordered by Mr. Jefferson to attend to that business." He adds that he gave himself no more concern about the matter "being confident," he states with his usual egotism, "that the meaning of Mr. Jefferson's order to Mr. Ellicott could not be to publish the plan without my knowledge or concurrence and convinced that it would not be completely finished without recourse to the larger map in my possession." [3]

He does not refer to the request made by Mr. Ellicott for the larger plan which he refused,[4] but he does state that in the

[1] "Major L'Enfant had no plans prepared for the Capitol or government house. He said he had them in his head." Jefferson to Commissioner Johnson, March 8, 1792. Jefferson Papers.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, March 6, 1792. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI.

[3] L'Enfant to Lear. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 144, Vol. 2.

[4] Ellicott informed the commissioners that in preparing the plan for engraving, in which he had the aid of his brother: "We met with difficulties of a very serious nature. Major L'Enfant refused us the use of the original. What his motive was, God knows. The plan which we have furnished, I believe, will be found to answer the ground better than the large one in the Major's hands." Andrew Ellicott to the Commissioners, Feb. 23, 1792. Commissioners' Letter Book.

course of a few days he went to the engravers to see how far the draft of the plan was advanced, "and to my great surprise found it in the state in which it now is, most unmercifully spoiled and altered from the original plan to a degree indeed evidently tending to disgrace me." He also adds in a postscript that he had that day sent to Mr. Ellicott "for the plan together with other drafts necessary for me to redress the error, notwithstanding his proceeding I was inclined to do, to accelerate the engraving." But Ellicott declined to allow the drawing to go to L'Enfant, probably fearing that would be the last sight of it for him.

At this distance of time it is perhaps impossible to hold the scales justly in weighing the merits of such a character as L'Enfant. It is quite apparent, however, that he was determined on his own way, and, mingled with the persistency of an egoist, was the serious lack of system and steadiness in continued effort. He was probably incapable by nature of following with constancy a certain given course and was beset and led astray by the largeness and variety of his conceptions as well as his firm conviction of the superiority of his ideas.

"Every mode has been tried," writes Washington to L'Enfant, Feb. 28, 1792, "to accommodate your wishes on this principle, except changing the Commissioners (for commissioners there must be and under their direction the public buildings must be carried on or the law will be violated)."[1]

It was L'Enfant's haughty ultimatum in these last days of February that either the commissioners must be dismissed or that he be allowed to act independently. But as Jefferson observed in a letter to George Walker, who had evidently gone on to Philadelphia to do what he could for L'Enfant as

[1] Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI. From the letter of February 27 of Jefferson to L'Enfant, referring to a letter from L'Enfant of the day before, in which Jefferson states "it is understood that you absolutely decline acting under the authority of the present Commissioners" (Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 150, Vol. 2), it is evident that L'Enfant's connection with the city was terminated at that date. If he had served a few days longer, he would have completed a year from the time he arrived in Georgetown and began his study of the site of the city.

representing himself and other property holders friendly to L'Enfant, "the latter being impossible under the law and the former too arrogant to be answered, he was notified that his services were at an end." "Measures will be taken," he adds, "to procure plans for the public buildings in which business five months have been lost by a dependence on Major L'Enfant." [1]

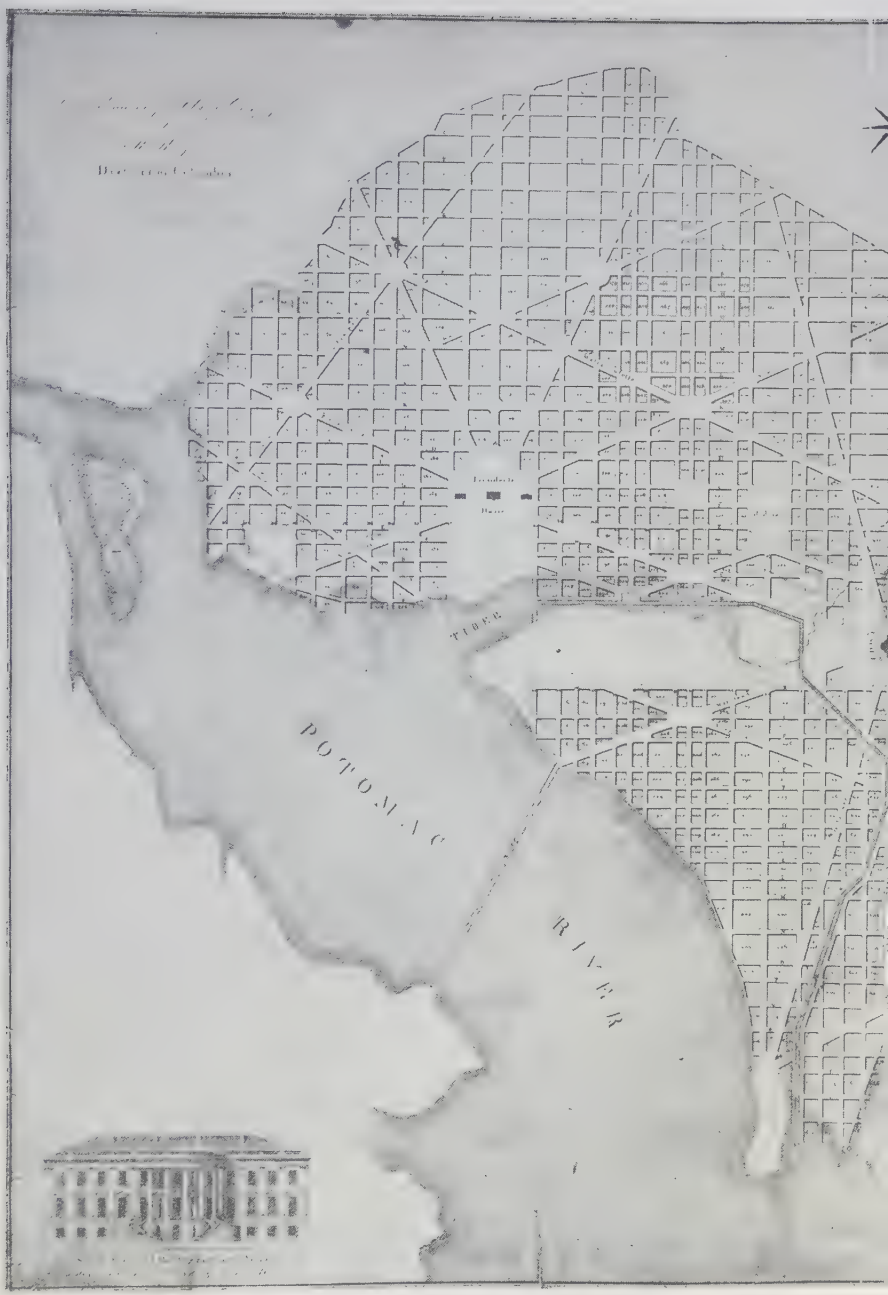
From the time the business of having a plan prepared for the engraver was placed in the hands of Ellicott until its completion and the engraver began its execution three weeks elapsed.[2]

From that drawing the first engraved map of the city was made. It is quite clear from the time taken by Ellicott to get the plan in readiness for the engraver as well as the contemporary references to the matter and a comparison of the engraved plan with the existing manuscript plan of L'Enfant, that Ellicott devised no new scheme. He rather filled in some of the lacking details in L'Enfant's drawing which was at the engravers, and which like the plan that has been preserved was not completely finished.[3] As Washington stated in a letter to the commissioners, Feb. 20, 1797, "had it not been for the materials which he [Ellicott] happened to possess, it is probable that no engraving from L'Enfant's draughts would have been exhibited to the public." And adds, "that many alterations have been

[1] Jefferson to George Walker, March 1, 1792. Jefferson Papers. Under date of Feb. 26, 1792, Dr. Stuart wrote to Washington about L'Enfant and the efforts made by the commissioners to continue him in the service not only on account of advancing the work of the city, but out of respect "to your good opinion of him. But all conciliatory treatment," he adds, "only tended to heighten the ideas of his own importance and to increase his natural perversity."

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Philadelphia, March 6, 1792. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI. "The matter was put into Mr. Ellicott's hand to prepare about three weeks ago. He has prepared it."

[3] Andrew Ellicott, under date of Feb. 23, 1795, wrote to Dr. William Thornton (J. Henley Smith Papers, Library of Congress), stating he intended to prepare an astronomical paper for the American Philosophic Society in which he will mention the city of Washington, and "the method pursued in executing that part of the plan in which I have been concerned will be explained."

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made from L'Enfant's plan by Major Ellicott with the approbation of the president." [1]

The most severe contemporary criticism was made by L'Enfant himself who in his letter to Lear, of Feb. 17, 1792, describes the drawing, then a few days out of his hands, from which the engraved plan was being made, "as unmercifully spoiled and altered from the original plan." Later on, he is more moderate; as for instance in his memorial to congress of Dec. 7, 1800, he states that "the engraved plan [2] is agreeable to the original lines of the grand divisions of the city, that it is correct with respect to the distribution of the sites of the capitol, judiciary, and the president's house, and that it is also correct in the course of the canal." In the same document he asserts "my plan" was procured and caused "to be engraved at Philadelphia," and also that the only alterations were those made by himself as early as August, 1791.

It cannot be demonstrated that the existing manuscript plan bearing the name of L'Enfant is the drawing referred to by Ellicott as "the original." It seems probable, however, that the drawing which was exhibited to the property owners on June 30, 1791, before any differences had arisen with L'Enfant, is the one spoken of as the "original" or "large" plan. As L'Enfant, himself says in a letter previously quoted, that was not the plan sent to congress, the latter having been prepared from one which he had made for the engraver. After the day in December when the plan was sent to congress there are several references to this "large" plan, all of which shows that it was then safely held in Major L'Enfant's custody.

Then when the break came, L'Enfant claims that his papers

[1] That these were minor alterations is evident from the summary given in a memorial of landowners to the president, dated Nov. 10, 1798, and in a letter of the commissioners, dated March 23, 1802. Doc. No. 157, 7th Cong., 1st Sess. American State Papers. Miscellaneous, pp. 330–336, Vol. 1. A comparison of L'Enfant's plan and the engraved plan is the best guide now available and shows that the "alterations" and "changes" spoken of in contemporary accounts related to details of the general scheme so brilliantly conceived by L'Enfant and not to any essential feature of that scheme.

[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 99, Vol. 2.

at the new city were taken possession of by the commissioners while he was absent and that he never recovered any part of them excepting "one of the proposed plan of the city of Washington which he received from Mr. Davidson." [1]

A doubt as to the identity of the existing manuscript plan with the "large" plan is, however, created by a statement in the proceedings of the commissioners, Oct. 13, 1792, that "the square number 128 in the original plan of the city of Washington, now in the hands of Major L'Enfant, is designated by number 160 in the engraved plan now in circulation." But squares in the existing L'Enfant manuscript plan are without numbers. The streets and avenues are without names or numbers in the L'Enfant plan, while they are to be found in the engraved plan and precisely the same as those of to-day. Another curious thing is that the bridges at the Three Sisters and at the ends of Pennsylvania Avenue and East Capitol Street, as proposed by L'Enfant, are not indicated on his existing manuscript map, but they are on the engraved map.[2]

L'Enfant's separation from the affairs of the city, although really forced by his "untoward disposition," as Washington phrased it, may be said to mark the beginning of the opposition to the commissioners which continued to be a factor in the administration of the city. No doubt, two parties would have arisen in any event, but this occurrence served

[1] Affidavit of L'Enfant, February, 1803. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 140, Vol. 2. Also (p. 141, the same) a sworn statement of Samuel Davidson, one of the attending property holders, on the occasion referred to, dated Jan. 16, 1802, in which he states that "the first plan exhibited by General Washington," and said to have come from a trunk containing Major L'Enfant's papers, was placed in his care, "which plan I did about two or three years ago deliver into Major L'Enfant's own hand equally as safe as when first left with me."

[2] There is trace of one of the L'Enfant plans to be found in an entry in the proceedings of the commissioners of Dec. 5, 1796, as follows, "Letter of the 1st inst. received from the president of the United States with a plan of the city of Washington drawn by Major L'Enfant." As Washington in the following March went out of office, it is probable that he was at that time making a disposition of the papers that had accumulated, and in pursuance of such a policy he forwarded this map to the commissioners as the proper custodians.

as a starting-point. The news of L'Enfant's dismissal probably did not reach the city, or at least was not officially made known, until about the middle of March.[1] In the meantime a letter had been prepared which was forwarded by Uriah Forrest, expressing to L'Enfant the concern of the property holders of a prospect of the city's losing the benefit of his services. It was signed by all the property holders, with two exceptions, and naturally these two were Daniel Carroll of Duddington and his relative, Notley Young. The hope was expressed that an adjustment would be reached. The phrases used in this letter were general, but appreciative of "the taste and judgment" displayed by L'Enfant in his work in the city, and the action may be construed as one of courtesy and kindly feeling on the part of some of the signers at least rather than a partisan feeling against the commissioners.[2]

The character of L'Enfant's following is to some extent outlined in a letter of Dr. Stuart to Washington, dated Feb. 26, 1792, when he states that L'Enfant's partisans are "Mr. Roberdeau, his deputy, and Messrs. Peter, Walker and Davidson, who took the ground that L'Enfant had the president's support in the contention and that he was not subject to the commissioners."

Dr. Stuart adds that Uriah Forrest, at that time mayor of Georgetown, was at the bottom of most of the confusion. He concludes with the following estimate of the practical results of L'Enfant's supreme control in the affairs of the city, which, in view of his course in other relations, was prophetic.

"If L'Enfant is made independent of the commissioners, then the Treasury of the Union will not be adequate to the expense incurred." In this letter is a positive assurance that the commissioners will resign if L'Enfant is not checked. It was not only the alternative of losing the services of L'Enfant or choosing a new board of commissioners that confronted Washington, at this time, but the effect upon the entire enterprise of a public ventilation of the differences.

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, March 13, 1792.
[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 136, Vol. 2.

This latter phase Washington kept constantly in mind, and so he hastened to write to the commissioners about the compensation proper to be paid to L'Enfant, for he had been engaged without any understanding of that sort. It may also be stated that in this letter, but incidentally of course, Washington again gives to L'Enfant the credit of the authorship of the plan of the city. "The plan of the city," he writes, "having met universal applause (as far as my information goes), and Major L'Enfant having become a very discontented man, it was thought that less than from $2500 to $3000 would not be proper to offer him for his services — instead of this, suppose 500 guineas and a lot in a good part of the city was to be substituted." [1] To what extent the display of interest in L'Enfant on the part of the property holders was due to regard for him and belief in his talents, and not to mere selfish considerations, it is, of course, impossible to determine. It is quite evident that L'Enfant had the faculty of inspiring those with whom he came in contact with admiration for his ability and taste. Washington held him in high esteem and parted with him with reluctance. Alexander Hamilton asked him to prepare "the devises for the coin," which L'Enfant declined as an "interfering proposal," to the great work he had undertaken of planning a capital city.[2] About the time L'Enfant's connection with the city came

[1] Washington to David Stuart, March 8, 1792. Washington's Letter Book, Vol. XI. In the further correspondence it came out that L'Enfant, during the year of his service, had received from the city funds $600 in addition to his expenses. The commissioners offered him 500 guineas and the choice of a lot, both of which he very characteristically declined. L'Enfant does not again directly appear in connection with the affairs of the city until the year 1800, when he presented a claim to congress for compensation for his services. The business dragged along, as is common in such cases, and finally, in the year 1810, an act was passed under the terms of which L'Enfant received $1394.20. In addition, a balance of $200 due on a lot purchased by L'Enfant was paid from the city funds, thus making a total of a little over $2000 that came to the designer of the plan of Washington for his work for the city.

[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 128, Vol. 2. Hamilton to L'Enfant, May 24, 1791. Also p. 86 of same, where L'Enfant in a memorial to congress refers to this proposal from the secretary of the treasury and his reasons for declining it.

to an end, Robert Morris had completed the purchase of an entire square of ground in Philadelphia, where he planned to erect a residence for his own use. He gave the commission to build the house to L'Enfant, and apparently left him to his own devices.

Three years elapsed, and the roof was not on the house. "Had you executed my intentions instead of your own," writes Morris, whose patience and, what was still more serious, whose money was exhausted, "my family would have inhabited the house instead of being liable to be turned out of doors." [1]

The house was never finished,—a result not entirely due to the elaborateness and expense of the plans and the methods of the architect. While Morris, in his statement of his affairs prepared after the crash, asserts that he was still solvent in 1792, it is debated by one of his biographers whether he was ever solvent.[2]

"A much more magnificent house than I ever intend to have built," is Morris's comment in his account of his property. The house was built of brick and white marble. Its elevation shows a design harmonious in proportion and dignified and pleasing. Like the Congress House in New York City, it exhibits the taste as well as skill of the designer.[3]

In addition to the Morris house, the largest enterprise of the sort up to that time attempted in the country, L'Enfant was called upon a few months after he had left the federal city

[1] Robert Morris, Patriot and Financier. Ellis Paxon Oberholzer. New York, 1903.

[2] The Financier and the Finances of the Revolution. W. E. Sumner.

[3] A curious light on the relations between Robert Morris and his architect is afforded by Morris's comment in his statement of his affairs, an undated document, published apparently about the year 1800, which is as follows: "C. P. L'Enfant. The sum at his debit, $5437.13 will, I suppose, be considered as paid on account of his services: the account of which he has not rendered; and various circumstances render me little solicitous on the score of his services. But he lent me thirteen shares of bank stock disinterestedly, and on this point I feel the greatest anxiety that he should get the same number of shares with the dividends, for the want of which he has suffered great distress, and as the best means I could devise, he is included in the Genesee assignment."

work to become the engineer in an enterprise that sought to establish at the falls of the Passaic, where the modern manufacturing centre of Patterson is located, the manufacturing metropolis of the United States. Alexander Hamilton and others prominent in the affairs of the day became interested, and it was largely through Hamilton's influence that L'Enfant's services were secured. A charter of incorporation was obtained from the New Jersey legislature, as well as a subscription from that state to the stock of the company. It may be noted that the charter which was said to have been drawn by Hamilton conferred upon the company the powers of a city charter with jurisdiction over a tract of six square miles. As there is a probability pointing to Hamilton as the author of the territorial jurisdiction feature of the federal district, his recurrence to the same idea in this enterprise may be looked upon as interesting, if not quite up to the importance of corroborative evidence.

The plan devised by L'Enfant was not alone for the building of the manufacturing plant, but also for the laying out of the town and for a magnificent road connecting the new town with Newark, N.J. There was to be in the new centre a splendid system of avenues radiating from the central business point of the town. In addition the designer proposed to divert the Passaic River into a fine aqueduct of stone supported on masonry arches and extending a distance of seven miles. As all this was planned for a company with only $243,000 capital, these elaborate projects naturally did not get beyond the paper stage. In July, 1792, he began his service with this company, and in September, 1793, he resigned, as the funds were totally inadequate to carry out such plans; but that circumstance did not trouble L'Enfant. The plans were modified after L'Enfant's retirement, but the enterprise even then could not be set going, and it was soon abandoned.[1]

The following spring L'Enfant was placed in charge of erect-

[1] History of New Jersey. Thomas Gordon. Trenton, 1834. The Founding of Patterson. William Nelson. N.J. Hist. Soc. Proc., 2d Series, Vol. 7.

ing fortifications at Mud Island in the Delaware River below Philadelphia, known as Fort Mifflin, which was one of the largest undertakings in the scheme for coast defences begun in the year 1794.[1] After the destruction of the public buildings by the British in Washington in the summer of 1814, he was placed in charge of the work of making Fort Washington a place of defence, which was his last professional engagement.[2]

L'Enfant spent the last years as a dependent of the Digges family. He died at Green Hill, the home of William Dudley Digges, Prince George County, Md., a short distance beyond the bounds of the District, June 14, 1825. His body was buried in the family lot on the farm, and on the 27th of April, 1909, was disinterred, and on the following day removed to Arlington after services in the presence of a distinguished audience held in the rotunda of the capitol. The cost of the removal and the erection of a monument were defrayed by an appropriation made by congress.

[1] American State Papers. Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 82.

[2] In an obituary notice of L'Enfant in the *Intelligencer*, June 25, 1825, it is stated in reference to his connection with the Fort Washington work, "He did not remain in authority to finish this work, which, being carried on by him, too extravagantly, it is believed, was put in charge of another officer."

## CHAPTER VIII

### PLAN OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING

"A MAN of uncommon talents in his way and of a more placid temper" — the comparison having reference to L'Enfant — was Washington's opinion of Andrew Ellicott in the fall of 1791. In connection with his brother, Benjamin Ellicott, he had done much surveying work in the new city, and it was what they had mapped out from their surveys that was used in preparing for the engraver L'Enfant's incomplete drawing. The actual survey was not completed until 1795, so that neither L'Enfant's manuscript plan nor the engraved plan was fitted to the ground. If the necessity had not existed of disposing of the city's interest in the lots, and if it had not been thought a map would aid the sales, it is doubtful if the engraving would have been done at such an early stage.

By the drawing as completed early in March, 1792, the general scheme of the plan of the city was defined and officially determined, so that at this day either of these plans is recognized as a good general representation of the city. The squares were not numbered in the L'Enfant plan, or at least in the one that has been preserved, and also some portions of it were not completely defined. A comparison of the engraved plan, where such details were supplied, with one based on an actual survey shows squares, lacking in the former, which have been inserted to provide for ground in excess of the designated squares. This circumstance explains the use of such terms as square "east of square No. —" or square "south of square No. —" etc.

One drawing was sent to Boston to be engraved, and proofs were received in Philadelphia in July. Then it was found the soundings of the Potomac and the Eastern Branch were not on the map, and Ellicott was told to supply them, and they were inserted in the Philadelphia plate. The map engraved at

Boston was much smaller than the Philadelphia map and is without the water soundings. It was used at the sale of lots in October, 1792, but owing to these two circumstances only a small number was struck off. The map engraved in Philadelphia, but not received in the new city until December, 1792, was the one that came into general use, and was regarded as the authoritative scheme of the city.

On this engraved map the "observations explanatory of the plan" as found on L'Enfant's map were retained, while L'Enfant's name and the "references" were omitted. The latter outlined in part the elaborate ideas of L'Enfant in providing such features as spaces for fountains, for a national church, for educational institutions, for buildings to be erected by each state and for the treatment of East Capitol Street with an arcade on each side bordered with shops. Only two reservations were designated on the engraved plan, namely, for the capitol and for the president's house, but the walk, or, as it came to be called, the Mall, was shown, as well as the garden about the president's house and also Lafayette Square just as they appeared on the L'Enfant plan. Of the seventeen reservations finally declared by proclamation of President Washington, and with three exceptions still used for public purposes, all but one are found on the manuscript plan.[1]

A feature of L'Enfant's city planning that was early abandoned was the space, as shown on the engraved plan, proposed for a naval column. This memorial was to stand on the banks of the Potomac and on the ground from 7th Street to the river and between I and M streets, S. W.[2]

While only two reservations were officially selected, yet it seemed to be understood from the outset that only a beginning had been made, and that the L'Enfant plan was finally to be carried out in its entirety. It is probable L'Enfant, in his intercourse with the landowners and others, spoke with kin-

[1] Potomac Flats Case, Vol. 6, p. 152. Washington's proclamation of March 2, 1797, designating the reservations.

[2] As early as April, 1793, this space was divided into squares and lots. Com. Procs., April 3, 1793.

dling enthusiasm of his design, and more especially of the generous provision to be made for the uses of the government and the enhancement to the beauty of the surroundings when all the selected spaces would be utilized by the erection of public buildings, and the placing of fountains and statuary. No doubt the French designer grew eloquent as he pictured the city with such embellishments intended for the use of the federal government, while in addition he pointed out on his plan the sites designed for structures to serve local needs, as a court-house, markets, a bank and an exchange.

At any rate, whatever the source of such ideas, they became firmly implanted in the minds of those interested in the city, as numerous allusions attest. An early illustration of this may be found in the direction of the commissioners to Ellicott of Sept. 1, 1792, to divide into lots preparatory to the second sale squares near "the president's house, capitol . . . the judiciary, the markets," thus giving recognition to at least two reservations which were not formally designated as such until later years. It may be noted also that in the above order the term, mall, is first used in reference to L'Enfant's walk between the capitol and the president's house.

"Ellicott is to go on week after next," writes Jefferson to the commissioners, March 6, 1792, "to finish laying off the plan on the ground and surveying and platting the city." The importance of zeal and vigor was pointed out, for, as Washington stated in a letter to Dr. Stuart of about the same date, urging expedition in the business of the city, that the enemies of the enterprise say "if inactivity and contractedness mark the steps of the commissioners, whilst the contrary on the part of this state [Pennsylvania] is displayed in providing commodious buildings for Congress, etc., the government will remain where it now is." While seeing the obstacles to be overcome, Washington does not lose the ideal he has for the city, for he tells the commissioners "that the public buildings in size, form and elegance should look beyond the present day." [1]

[1] Washington to David Stuart, Philadelphia, March 8, 1792. Washington's Letter Book, No. XI. In the previous fall, Jefferson writing

Now that L'Enfant was not relied upon for plans for the public buildings, the commissioners by the middle of March caused advertisements to be inserted in the newspapers, offering premiums for plans for the capitol building and the president's house. But it was realized that an essential to despatch in such an enterprise was money, and it was apparently foreseen at that time that reliance upon the proceeds of the sale of lots would not be justified. For in addition to other circumstances the property belonging to the public had to share the market with an equal amount of land in private ownership, so that in effect the entire 6000 acres within the limits of the city, less the one third deducted for streets and the few hundred acres devoted to public uses, came on the market at one time.

It was therefore decided to negotiate a loan on the city property. It was the evident intention to supplement in this way the receipts from the sale of lots, but in this particular disappointment was the only outcome, as was the case so frequently with other projects of financing in the early days of city building. The negotiation for the loan was intrusted to Samuel Blodgett, Jr., who went to Boston for that purpose, and while there the engraving of the city plan was done under his direction. But the general financial conditions were found to be so unfavorable that the loan project was abandoned. At that early stage such a set-back was not serious, but later on, when money must be had or all work cease, the financing phase of the undertaking was the most perplexing and trying of all the problems that arose.

As this is the first appearance of the name of Samuel Blodgett, Jr., in the official records of the city, some account of a man who was one of the most striking figures in the group of the early promoters of the new centre will not be out of place. He was born in Goffstown, N.H., Aug. 28, 1757. His father, a prominent business man and inventor in that state and the

to Washington from Georgetown states, "We [Madison was with him] were told in Baltimore that that place was becoming better humored towards this and found it better that the government should be here than in Philadelphia." Washington Papers. Sparks' Index Series, Vol. 76, p. 409, Sept. 8, 1791.

projector of an early canal around Amoskeag Falls, Manchester, N.H., is described as having superior ingenuity, intelligence and enterprise and of inventive genius ahead of his times. His mind was inclined to theory rather than practice and was interested in what was for the benefit of the community rather than for his personal advantage.[1]

The traits of character and disposition of the father were inherited in no small degree by the son who bore his name. When but nineteen years of age, Samuel Blodgett, Jr., was commissioned as captain in the New Hampshire militia raised at the outbreak of the revolution. His company was attached to Colonel Enoch Poor's regiment and also to the regiment of Colonel Nathan Hale. After a service of a little more than a year, Mr. Blodgett resigned, Dec. 22, 1777.[2]

After leaving the army, Blodgett went into business in Exeter, N.H., but the venture not proving to be successful, he went to Boston, where he engaged in the East India trade and made money. In the year 1789 he removed to Philadelphia, where the next year his wife died. The year 1792 proved to be the most eventful in his history, for it was then that the Insurance Company of North America was started in Philadelphia, which was the successor of a tontine association organized by Blodgett. The insurance company had a capital stock of $600,000 and was the first joint-stock company in the United States. Blodgett was a member of the first board of directors.

He also that year married Rebecca Smith, daughter of Rev. William Smith, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, then twenty years of age and distinguished for her beauty, wit and vivacity. Previous to the year 1790, Blodgett made two visits to Europe, and while there examined the organization and methods of various universities and became an early and ardent advocate of the establishment at the federal city of a

[1] History of Manchester, N.H. C. E. Potter. Manchester, 1856. The leading facts in the life of Samuel Blodgett, Jr., are derived from Manchester Historic Association, Vol. 1, Part 2, Manchester, N.H., 1859.

[2] New Hampshire State Papers. Revolutionary Rolls, Vol. 1, p. 554; also Vol. 3, p. 5.

national university.[1] To Blodgett the largeness of the scheme of the federal city must have made a special appeal, and during the months of preparation in the year 1791, Philadelphia was the centre. With his associations of a business and social nature in that city, Blodgett in all probability heard a great deal of what was proposed to promote this enterprise and the various plans which were no doubt discussed there. It seems likely he attended at the new city the first sale of lots in the fall of 1791, although there is no record of his being there.

At any rate, early the next year and on the 12th day of January, 1792, he received a deed of sale from Philip Richard Fendall of Alexandria, Va., of a tract of land called Jamaica and comprising 494 acres. This tract lay within the lines of the city and extended in a broad belt from Dupont Circle in a northeasterly direction entirely across the city, and overlapped the northern bounds. The consideration named in the deed was 39,520 Mexican silver dollars. By this transaction he became the second in the group of large purchasers who are identified with the city for, as the list of names of the members of the syndicate represented by Mr. Fendall and printed in a previous chapter suggests, he was not the first to avail himself of the opportunities for land speculation so attractively presented at the federal city.

In the spring of 1792 the commissioners made a contract with Leonard Harbaugh of Baltimore for the erection of a stone bridge across Rock Creek on a line with K Street. This was in furtherance of L'Enfant's scheme of providing an outlet for the post road through the city. In fact, previous to his dismissal he had made an agreement with property holders

[1] The earliest suggestion of the founding of such an institution in this country must be credited to Blodgett, if his account is accepted of an interview he had with Washington in camp at Cambridge in 1775. Economica. Samuel Blodgett. Appendix, p. 20. Washington, 1806. As the author of Thoughts on the Increasing Wealth and National Economy of the United States of America, City of Washington, printed by Way and Groff, 1801, he ranks as the first American writer on economics.

west of Rock Creek to donate a street and one half of the abutting lots in consideration of the city building a bridge and a causeway.[1]

At that time the mouth of Rock Creek formed a broad opening that began at the base of the ridge west of Rock Creek, along which M Street passes, and extended as far west almost as 32d Street.[2] In consequence the line of K Street on the west side passed entirely through water, and in order to make a bridge available at that point it was necessary to build a causeway. The latter was done, and was $80 \times 1300$ feet and formed a portion of what is now Water Street in Georgetown. The ground north of the causeway, as well as that south of it, was drained, and is now covered with buildings. The scheme was to have been of advantage both to the public and to the landowners, and the expense was to be met by the sale of the land thus reclaimed. As that was not a success, and the commissioners advanced the money, the brunt of the failure bore upon the city funds. In addition Harbaugh's plan of building arches was defective and the bridge fell down, so that the city authorities had to suffer that additional loss; and as if that was not a sufficient train of disasters to attach to a single phase of the business, they were made the target of criticisms of those interested in the eastern portion of the city, who claimed they saw in the entire scheme only the favoritism of the commissioners towards the section of the city near to Georgetown.[3] There were other projects of a char-

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, March 26, 1792. Some of the subscribers to the agreement were Benjamin Stoddert, Robert Peter, Uriah Forrest, Will Deakins, Jr., and Philip Barton Key.

[2] Rock Creek must have been at that period a large stream, navigable for some distance, for on the 23d of September, 1792, the Maryland legislature passed a law forbidding the erection of weirs and hedges in that stream "within two miles of the river Potomac" in order to prevent "injury of the navigation of said creek."

[3] The bridge consisted of three arches of stone, and before the evil days came upon it was regarded as an important public enterprise. The corner-stone of the eastern abutment was laid on the national anniversary in the presence of the commissioners and citizens. There was a procession and "a discourse suitable to the occasion," and toasts

acter to show that the city builders were men of large ideas and believed the new city was destined in a short time to be a populous centre. It was proposed to continue the canal of the Potomac Company from the Little Falls some two miles from Georgetown into the city.[1] Another waterway connection, however, was actually begun at this time by a contract made Sept. 1, 1792, for making a cut fifteen feet wide and twelve feet deep to join the tide-waters of James Creek and of the Tiber, a distance of one and one eighth miles in accordance with the plan of a canal as delineated on the map of the city.

The governmental powers conferred on the commissioners by the Maryland legislature were further brought into exercise when on the 27th of March, 1792, a license was issued to William Venable to sell liquor "within the city of Washington for the term of one year unless suspended or voided." [2] Another function of a city government that was then first exercised was the opening of streets. Beyond the clearing

were drunk (*Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, July 10, 1792). A month later the corner-stone of the western abutment was laid with similar formality.

[1] Jefferson to Thomas Johnson, March 8, 1792. Jefferson Papers. Washington, whose deep interest in the Potomac Company had not abated, advised that the practicability of this plan be investigated, and in a letter to Dr. Stuart about a month later, he says, "There is such an intimate connection in political and pecuniary considerations between the federal district and the inland navigation of the Potomac that no exertions, in my opinion, should be dispensed with to accomplish the latter." Washington's Letter Book. It is worthy of note that while nothing came of this suggestion, years later the successor of the Potomac Company extended its canal into the city to the Tiber, making a water connection similar to what was proposed in the earlier scheme.

[2] Such a function, according to the Maryland custom, was retained in the county government even in the case of incorporated towns. As, for example, the mayor's court of Georgetown, consisting of the mayor, recorder and aldermen, or any three or more of them, was given the same jurisdiction as to debts which was conferred on county justices, and also exercised concurrent jurisdiction with the county court in all criminal cases except such as affected life. But the power of granting liquor licenses in Georgetown remained in the county court until the year 1799, when it was vested in the mayor's court. Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 148, Vol. XI.

of a passageway the commissioners gave very little attention to street improvement, or perhaps it would be more correct to say they found as the work of city building went on that there was no money available for such purposes. However, after the new post road was surveyed and the ground grubbed over, as was done in the spring of 1792, then directions were given to the general overseer of labor to have "a breadth of two perches done in the middle of the avenue from the president's palace to the capitol." [1]

At this time the first of the landowners to realize from the direct sale of land to the government was paid for ground taken for public use. This was money due for a part of the land that had been reserved and where the president's house, or the palace, as it continued to be called by the name first used by L'Enfant, was being built. Under the terms of the agreement with the proprietors they were to be paid for all land taken for public purposes, except the streets, at the rate of twenty-five pounds per acre, from the money derived from the sale of lots belonging to the public in the vicinity of the land thus reserved. So on the 6th of June, 1792, Samuel Davidson received about $548 for eight and a quarter acres, which transaction must have appeared to the owner as a species of gratuity on his part to the government, especially when he realized that what he received for over eight acres was not more than had been paid at the public sale the previous fall for a single lot, containing only about an eighth of an acre.

Later on, the commissioners were harassed and at times put to expense by the efforts of the architects in charge of erecting the capitol to make changes in the plans. As will be seen in the case of that building, the design of one man was left to the execution of others. It was also soon developed that the plan of the city could be bettered. At least that was Ellicott's idea. At the outset he laid the matter before Washington shortly after he returned from Philadelphia and entered upon

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, April 14, 1792. This date may properly be assigned as the birthday of that historic thoroughfare, Pennsylvania Avenue.

his work as the principal in the surveying department. He asked that "an examination be made into the execution of the general plan of the city by men of known professional abilities." The president, however, declined to take any action on this request, in accordance with what became his settled policy, not to interfere with those employed by the commissioners or under them.[1]

It is apparent the suggestions of Ellicott or those of others were taken up by the commissioners, as a month later they submitted for the approval of the president a number of changes. The latter, however, refused to sanction them. Exactly what was proposed can only be gathered from the letter of Jefferson to the commissioners, giving the decision of the president.[2]

Jefferson's summary of the commissioners' recommendations is very general, but he speaks of the necessity, in case of their adoption, of changing all the avenues which point to the capitol, removing the site of that building and of the president's house farther away from each other and apparently bringing the president's house nearer to Georgetown. A reference in the correspondence of the commissioners as late as April 9, 1793, indicates that Ellicott also proposed to narrow the mall.

The system adopted by the commissioners of giving only a general supervision to the business of the city was found after a year's experience to be inadequate and instead of occasional meetings, regular monthly sessions were held beginning in May, 1792. In addition it was deemed advisable to have a superintendent to be in charge during the recesses of the board. For this place Samuel Blodgett, Jr., was recommended by some of the landowners. Although not a presidential appointment, but as indicating the close attention given to city affairs by the president, it is interesting to note that the president made inquiries of Dr. Stuart about Blodgett as to whether he "is a man of industry, arrangement and integrity," adding that "he had only a slight acquaintance with him."

[1] Jefferson to Ellicott, March 22, 1792. Jefferson Papers.

[2] Jefferson to the Commissioners, April 20, 1792. Letters of Commissioners.

The appointment of Blodgett was made by the commissioners the following January. He was designated as "supervisor of the buildings and in general of the affairs committed to our care." [1]

This suggestion of the need of a superintendent came from Washington, who realized the necessity of a more minute supervision of the business of the city than was possible from non-resident officials who made monthly visits to the city. The commissioners so far recognized the force of the president's criticism that in December, 1792, they gave notice that "constant attendance will be given by themselves or by a person properly authorized at their office in Georgetown." Several years elapsed before a resident board was obtained. But the plan of having a superintendent, which was apparently tested in the appointment of Blodgett, was soon abandoned, as no effort was made to supply his place upon the expiration of the year.[2] Three months had elapsed since the first appearance of the advertisement of the middle of March, inviting designs for the two public buildings. The earliest response came from James Hoban, an architect living in Charleston, S.C.[3] About the middle of June, 1792, Hoban came to Washington, for the first time, to view the ground and prepare a plan for the president's house. On coming north he went first to Philadelphia and presented to Washington letters of introduction from Colonel Laurens and other citizens of South Carolina. With a letter to the commissioners from Washington, Hoban

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, Jan. 5, 1793. His compensation was fixed at $1600 per year, payable in money or in lots, and he was next in power to the commissioners.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Nov. 13, 1792. War Department Manuscripts.

[3] James Hoban was born in Dublin, Ireland, about the year 1762. He was educated there, and in the year 1781 won the medal offered art students by the Society of Arts. Shortly afterwards he came to America and settled at Charleston, S.C., where he designed the state house building, which in later years was destroyed by fire. He also designed a number of private residences in that city. For thirty years, and until his death in 1832, he was in the employment of the government in the city of Washington. History of the United States Capitol, Vol. 1, p. 95. Glenn Brown. Washington, 1900.

went to the new city. A month later Washington stopped at Georgetown on his way to Mount Vernon, and with the commissioners examined the plans submitted for the president's house. On the 17th of July, 1792, the premium for the best plan was awarded by this jury to James Hoban.[1]

Hoban chose as his premium a gold medal of the value of ten guineas. He was employed to superintend the work, "and such other work of the kind as may be in execution for 300 guineas per year." (Proceedings of Commissioners, July 16, 1792.) Jefferson in a letter to the commissioners, dated July 11, 1792, mentions sending plans, and among them one "of a president's house by a Mr. Hallet." As far as known, no other designs were submitted in this competition.

The original drawings of Hoban are not in existence, but they contemplated a building with wings. The central portion was alone erected. The conception of the design is said to have been suggested by the residence of the Duke of Leinster in Dublin described as the most stately private edifice of the day in Ireland. As the home of the Royal Dublin Society, the structure is still one of the notable buildings of that city, but it is evident that it served only as a general suggestion to the architect of the president's house.

Two days after the decision had been reached on the plans submitted, the commissioners and the author of the accepted design "went to the site of the palace that he might lay out the foundations — a great part of the materials for the foundation now lying on the spot." [2]

At this time the commissioners considered the plans that had been submitted for the capitol building, but none of them met with approval.[3]

[1] "The plans for the President's House, prepared by John Collins, appearing to be scientific and the second in merit which has been laid before them, they directed the payment of $150 to Mr. Collins as a token of their sense of the merits of his essay."

[2] Commissioners to Washington, July 19, 1792. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[3] The list of competitors as given in the History of the Capitol, Vol. 1, p. 6, is as follows: Stephen Hallet, Judge George Turner,

The plan of Stephen Hallet, "a French artist," as the commissioners termed him, who was then living in Philadelphia, seemed to the commissioners the most promising of all those submitted, and so they wrote him that the style of architecture which he employed attracted attention, but the distribution of the parts of the building was not thought sufficiently convenient, and they asked him to come to the new city for a conference, expressing the belief that his "design may perhaps be improved into approbation." He was told that his expenses would be paid.

Washington was, however, more pleased with the plans of Judge Turner of Pennsylvania than with any of the others, and it also appears that features of Blodgett's plan met with approval, so that to these three were given an opportunity to revise their drawings and submit them again.[1]

The second competition proved fruitless, and on the 29th of August, 1792, the commissioners informed Samuel Blodgett, "The Turner plan was returned as not available. As the other plans were not satisfactory, Mr. Hallet, a French artist, was engaged to prepare one." [2]

Some six weeks later the commissioners received a letter

Samuel Blodgett, Lamphiere, S. M. McIntire, Jacob Small, James Diamond, Charles Winter Smith, Andrew Mayo, Philip Hart, Abram Farris, Colin Williamson, Carstairs and Hasborough. "The plans submitted," observes Mr. Brown, the author of this book, "were with few exceptions peculiarly indifferent. The larger number of the drawings were made by amateurs or contractors who did not have the first idea as to what constituted either good draftsmanship or design or what were the necessary requisites of a Congressional hall." In this work are reproduced a number of the designs submitted from the originals which are in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society. Blodgett's attempt at architectural designing was not the first one, as he is said to be the author of the plan of the building in Philadelphia for the Bank of the United States which was completed in 1797. History of Philadelphia, Scharf and Westcott, Vol. 2, p. 1068. Philadelphia, 1884.

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book. Commissioners to Hallet, July 17, 1792. Commissioners to Washington, July 19, 1792. Washington to the Commissioners, July 23, 1792.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book.

from Dr. William Thornton, written in October, 1792, from the island of Tortola, West Indies, asking permission to submit drawings for the public buildings. As the design for the president's house had been accepted, the commissioners informed him they would be glad to have a design submitted for the capitol. He was asked to send his drawings directly to the president of the United States at Philadelphia, where those of Hallet were to go. Before the correspondence was concluded Dr. Thornton had returned to the United States and resumed his residence at Philadelphia.[1] In that city was the home of Hallet, and so in the closing months of 1792 it became the scene of what proved to be the final contest for the prize of designing the principal building in the republic of the new world. In the first month of the new year, the revised plans of Hallet were ready, and Dr. Thornton had submitted his design. The issue was not in doubt. The Thornton design at once met with the approval of Washington. "The grandeur, simplicity and convenience" of the Thornton plan, as it impressed Washington, also found favor with Jefferson, who wrote, "Thornton's plan had captivated the eyes and judgment of all."

The author of the plan had then passed his thirty-first year, and had been a resident and citizen of the United States for some four years. For two years just passed he had been living in the West Indies, where he was born on the 27th of May, 1761, on the island of Tortola.

The father of Dr. Thornton was an Englishman and a member of the Society of Friends. He died when his son William was two years of age.[2] He was a man of means, and left his son independent, and the latter was given the benefit of the best educational facilities of the day. At an early age he was sent to England, where he was educated. He studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh,

[1] Letter of Daniel Carroll, commissioner, Georgetown, Nov. 15, 1792, to Dr. William Thornton, 159 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. J. Henley Smith Papers.

[2] Dr. Thornton to John Quincy Adams, Nov. 18, 1818. J. Henley Smith Papers.

where he received in 1784 the degree of doctor of medicine.[1] After completing his course at the university Dr. Thornton, who was then twenty-three years old, travelled on the continent, spending some time in Paris, where he continued his studies, and then he came to this country, arriving at that interesting period when the constitution of the new American republic was being ratified by the states. He was in New York early in the year 1787, and at the opening of the following year he was a resident of Wilmington, Delaware, where he became a citizen of that state by subscribing to "the affirmation of fidelity," to the state of Delaware required by an act of the general assembly of that state, the first to ratify the constitution.[2] He became interested in the ideas of James Fitch as to the application of steam as a motive power for boats, and states he was one of the chief proprietors and directors in the company that was formed. The boat that was constructed by Fitch and Co., Dr. Thornton states, in the year 1789, made a trip on the Delaware from Philadelphia to Trenton, and he adds it would have been successful if it had the funds and patronage which Fulton was more fortunate in securing.[3]

In addition to contributing money for the development of the steamboat, Dr. Thornton states he was the only person in the company that had seen a steam engine. After the trial of the first boat it was decided to build another, enlarging certain parts. This work was undertaken during the absence of Dr. Thornton in the West Indies. "They soon forgot my directions," —not to make any alterations, — "and made such alterations to

[1] The parchment degree, with its ponderous leaden seal, is among the Thornton papers in the J. Henley Smith collection. Library of Congress.

[2] J. Henley Smith Papers.

[3] Dr. Thornton refused to acknowledge the claims of Fulton as the inventor of the application of steam in boat navigation. He also some years later got out several patents, claiming that his invention was the application of steam to wheels at the sides of a boat or vessel, instead of paddles at the sides, and in this, he asserts, he anticipated Fulton. Thornton Papers on the steamboat. J. Henley Smith Papers. Also a short account of the origin of steamboats written in 1810. W. Thornton, Washington. Rapine and Elliot, 1814.

simplify it that they rendered it too simple and it never moved."[1] During this period he had become a resident of Philadelphia, but at that time he had no notion of establishing himself permanently in this country. He was planning to go back to Tortola and engage in the practice of his profession. His property interests were there, including a number of slaves, and that consideration, perhaps also impressed on his mind by the new movement in England to establish at Sierra Leone, Africa, a colony of free blacks, brought him to the conclusion that he would free his own slaves and lead them with free blacks from America to the wider opportunities and the personal liberty under the new government to be founded in Africa. At one time he proposed to friends in England to take charge of the new undertaking.

With his connections in England, his attainments and personal charm of manner, Dr. Thornton evidently moved in the best society of Philadelphia of that day. He knew Dr. Franklin well enough to be invited to dinner at his house. Perhaps it was Dr. Franklin's interest in the Library Co. of Philadelphia that drew him towards the young Englishman, for in the spring of 1789 the movement towards the erection of a building to house the books had reached such a stage that designs for the proposed structure were invited. A number of plans were submitted, but one bearing the name William Thornton was pronounced by the judges to be the best, and the prize of a share of stock in the company valued at $40 was awarded to him.[2]

As one phase of a rather remarkable versatility of talents this excursion of Dr. Thornton into the field of a practising architect is not surprising. He had already displayed a practical knowledge of machinery in connection with the Fitch steamboat, and his aptitude in the use of the pencil and of

[1] Account of his connection with the steamboat, Jan. 25, 1802. J. Henley Smith Papers. Also the pamphlet on the steamboat printed in 1814.

[2] Historic Mansions and Buildings of Philadelphia. Thompson Wescott, Philadelphia, 1877. Also Notes for a History of the Library Co. of Philadelphia. John Jay Smith, from Waldies Portfolio and Companion to the Select Circulating Library.

colors in drawing had been shown in his illustrations of topics of natural history which were the subject of letters with several correspondents. But even with such abilities and a lively interest in all that was instructive and, it might also be added, confidence in his own powers, it does appear rather remarkable that, without any experience in a profession to which years of technical training are given, he should have had not only the temerity to make the essay, but should meet with success from the start. As he explains his first appearance in the rôle of an architect, it all seems quite simple and natural, but also highly impracticable. This is what he writes in a sort of autobiographic fragment dated Oct. 12, 1802: "I saw a publication for a plan of a public library in Philadelphia offering a premium for the best.

"When I travelled I never thought of architecture. But I got some books and worked a few days, then gave a plan in the ancient Ionic order, which carried the day.

"The president and secretary of state published a premium of a gold medal of $500 and a lot for a house in the city of Washington for the best plan and elevation of a capitol of the United States. I lamented not having studied architecture, and resolved to attempt the grand undertaking and study at the same time. I studied some months and worked almost night and day, but I found I was opposed by regular architects from France and various other countries." [1] Dr. Thornton went to Tortola in the fall of 1790.[2] He was accompanied by his bride, Anna Maria Brodeau, the daughter of Ann Brodeau, an Englishwoman who was in charge of a school in Philadelphia. Mrs. Thornton is spoken of by her mother at the time of her marriage as "but a child." She was born in England, was well read and intelligent and had such accomplishments as music, painting and a knowledge of the French language.

[1] End of the fragment as preserved in the J. Henley Smith Papers.

[2] Dr. Thornton states on page 6, Cadmus, that he went to the West Indies on the 16th of October to visit his mother. She had married again and was living there with her husband. A brother of Dr. Thornton was also a resident of Tortola.

The return of the Thorntons to the United States, two years later, brought to a close the West Indian episode in their lives, although communication by correspondence with the members of the family there was maintained. A few months after the capitol competition had been settled in his favor, Dr. Thornton applied to the president for the appointment of private secretary to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Lear. The reply of the president shows a high degree of personal regard which continued through the years of increasing intimacy down to the death of the president.[1]

The month following this application a prize dissertation, by Dr. Thornton, on the elements of written language was awarded a gold medal by the American Philosophical Society.[2]

This discussion of a plan for an alphabet representing the various sounds and a plea for a simplified spelling, together with a method of teaching oral speech to the deaf and dumb, which is now in use by the leading schools for that class, proved to be his principal work.[3]

Before the close of the year 1793 Dr. Thornton broke up his home in Philadelphia, and with his wife and mother-in-law came to Georgetown, where he established his residence. He had declined the office tendered him by the commissioners of superintendent of the capitol,[4] and therefore came to the new seat

[1] "I have been duly favored," writes Washington to Dr. Thornton, Dec. 3, 1793, "with your letter of the 29th ult. and thank you for your obliging offer to supply the office lately occupied by Mr. Lear. I am persuaded it would have been ably filled with your abilities, but previous to the departure of that gentleman, my arrangements were made in favor of Mr. Dandridge, who is now in the exercise of the office of private secretary." J. Henley Smith Papers.

[2] Cadmus, a treatise on the elements of written language, with an essay on teaching the deaf and dumb to speak. William Thornton, M.D., member of the societies of Scots Antiquaries of Edinburgh and Perth; the Medical Society and the Society of Natural History of Edinburgh; the American Philosophical Society. Philadelphia. R. Aitken, 1793.

[3] The book was printed early in January, 1793, as there is a letter in the Thornton Papers from President Washington, dated January 8, acknowledging with thanks the receipt of a copy.

[4] History of the United States Capitol, p. 9.

of government without having any regular business or occupation, thus making no change in that respect in his way of living up to that time except for a brief period when he practised medicine in Philadelphia.

President Washington's approval of the Thornton plan in Philadelphia was evidently looked upon by Mr. Jefferson as the last word on the subject, although as yet the commissioners had not seen the drawings, for, in writing to those officials under date of Jan. 31, 1793, he expresses his satisfaction with Dr. Thornton's plan and its superiority to that of Hallet. Jefferson suggests the latter be taken into the service at a fixed allowance. "I understand that his necessities render it material that he know what his allowance is to be."

The design submitted by Dr. Thornton in the competition has not been preserved, but it is evident that, like the others, it was merely a sketch showing the elevation of the proposed structure without the detailed drawings. The selection of a design was followed by the preparation of working drawings, and Hallet was employed for that purpose. This division of the work of an architect led to what proved to be a fruitful source of annoyance and delay, for in this way men were expected to carry out the ideas of others, and the history of the building of the capitol goes to show that the architects, with the exception of Mr. Hoban, intrusted to carry out Thornton's plan, sooner or later came to the conclusion they could improve the original design, and persisted in trying to have their way.

Early in March Dr. Thornton made his first visit to the city. He came with a letter of introduction from the president to the commissioners dated March 3, 1793. A few days later, or about the middle of March, some two months after the business had been settled in Philadelphia, the commissioners officially approved the Thornton plan and awarded him the prize of $500 and a lot. "As Mr. Hallet ranks next," they stated, "and because he has applied himself to the competition by particular request, they have given him the same reward." This probably referred to the time given by Hallet to the preparation of a plan as requested by the commissioners in the

latter part of the previous August, when all the plans submitted were pronounced unsatisfactory.[1] The commissioners planned to stake out the foundations of the capitol building during the coming fall, and employed Hallet to superintend the erection of the building. As Dr. Thornton's plan had been accepted with no estimate of the cost, the commissioners called on Hallet to furnish the figures, and, as the result of his study of the drawings, he reached the conclusion that the plan was not practicable, independent of its great cost.[2] Hallet also prepared another design, which Jefferson states was "the one adopted as Dr. Thornton's plan rendered into practicable form."[3]

The differences were of such a character, however, that Washington decided to submit the matter to a conference or a commission composed of men whose judgment might be relied upon to bring some definite result out of the tangle. The commission was composed of Mr. Hoban, Mr. Hallet, Dr. Thornton and Mr. Carstairs, a builder of Philadelphia, or "undertaker," as the term was in that day, who had been selected by Dr. Thornton, and Colin Williamson, who was also a builder. As a result of this interchange of views it was concluded the defects of the Thornton design could be cured.[4] Then in a letter to the commission above referred to, Washington stated it had been decided to begin the foundation of the capitol upon the plan as exhibited by Mr. Hallet, "preserving," he adds, "the original ideas of Dr. Thornton, but such as upon the whole might be considered as his (Mr. Hallet's plan), leaving the recess of the east front open for further consideration."

[1] A feature of this award to the author of the design of the principal building of the federal city brings out in strange contrast the condition of the finances of the city at that time, for in the proceedings of the commissioners under date of June 22, 1793, three months after the award, there is a record of an order given in favor of Samuel Blodgett, "being the sum advanced by him to Dr. Thornton as a premium for the best plan of the Capitol."

[2] Washington to Jefferson, June 30, 1793.

[3] Washington to the Commissioners, July 25, 1793. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[4] Jefferson to Washington, July 17, 1793. Jefferson Papers.

Thus by the middle of July, 1793, the obstacle in the way of starting the building of the capitol was removed.

In the course of a couple of weeks, after the design of the president's house had been accepted and the exact location fixed upon, Washington again returned to the city, and in company with the commissioners "viewed the ground where the palace is to be and decided that the north front of the building should be brought up to the post fixed by Major L'Enfant for the centre of the north front. Among other reasons it will be most in view to the diagonals and on east and west streets, though not so much so from the capitol as might be wished." [1]

In a little more than two months the work of building had so far advanced that on the 13th of October, 1792, three days before the public sale of lots began, the corner-stone of the president's house was laid. A procession as usual at such functions was formed, headed by the commissioners and members of the masonic lodge and citizens of Washington and Georgetown.[2]

No doubt, this formal beginning of the president's house was arranged with reference to the second sale of lots. The offerings on that occasion were continued for three days, but the number of purchasers was not large. In addition to starting one of the two principal structures to be erected, several buildings had been built for the use of workmen and the storing of materials both in that vicinity and near the site of the capitol, a wharf on the river near the mouth of the Tiber west of 17th Street had been built and the opening of the post-road through the city had been begun.

Blodgett, who by that time was taking an active interest in the city, although not as yet officially connected with its management, gratified the commissioners by finding purchasers

[1] Commissioners to Thomas Johnson, Aug. 2, 1792. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] Proceedings of the Commissioners, Oct. 13, 1792. This was Masonic Lodge No. 9 of Georgetown, later known as Potomac Lodge. Federal Lodge No. 15, the first lodge organized in Washington, came into existence Sept. 12, 1793.

for fifteen lots, after the public sale, at $266 per lot. He also purchased from the commissioners the whole of square 688 then bounded by A and B and 1st and Capitol Square southeast, now a part of the capitol grounds, in furtherance of a scheme to improve it by the erection of houses, which was not carried out. At this time Blodgett bought from the commissioners and individuals several lots in other parts of the city, and when his acquisition of the Jamaica tract early in the following year is taken into consideration, his cash investments aggregated about $40,000.

On the very day that Blodgett became officially connected (Jan. 5, 1793) with the city, he succeeded in interesting the commissioners in one of his schemes, which gave endless trouble to them and contributed to his own financial downfall. He proposed a lottery, the principal prize of which was to be a hotel building to be erected in the city. The lottery was advertised as "by the commissioners appointed to prepare the public buildings, etc., within the city of Washington" and signed "Samuel Blodgett, agent for the affairs of the city." [1] The hotel was to cost $50,000. At the outset the enterprise was decidedly official. John M. Gantt, clerk of the commissioners, was one of the managers, and Samuel Davidson and Daniel Reintzel were requested by the board to prepare and examine the tickets for the drawing, which was to be held in the fall of 1793 about the date of the next sale of lots. William Deakins, Jr., the treasurer of the board, with Blodgett had the entire charge of selling the tickets, the former becoming responsible for the disposal of 40 per cent of the fifty thousand tickets, and Blodgett undertaking to sell the rest.

The plans of the building were prepared by James Hoban, the architect of the president's house, while the site at the northeast corner of 8th and E streets northwest belonged to the public, with the exception of the corner lot that was purchased by Blodgett from David Burnes and then transferred to the commissioners without pecuniary consideration, so that the

[1] *Gazette of the United States*, Jan. 19, 1793. The scheme is given in full.

entire site occupied by the building should be in the name of the commissioners.[1]

The national anniversary was chosen as the time for laying the corner-stone of the hotel, and on that occasion, according to a contemporary account, "1500 people were present and walked from thence in procession, preceded by a lodge of free masons, to a dinner, the principal dish of which consisted of an ox roasted whole. A number of toasts were drunk on the occasion, and the day concluded with much harmony." [2]

The building of brick had a frontage of one hundred and twenty feet and was two stories in height, with a basement and an attic story. Standing on the crest of what was known as the F Street ridge with a front adorned by a classic pediment, it presented an imposing mass in the fields and woods of the infant city. When the ninth day of September, 1793, came, it was found that a number of tickets deposited at different places for sale remained unsold, "and there being no fund established to pay any loss that might be sustained by keeping those tickets at the risk of the city, they (the commissioners) determined to defer the drawing until they could be all sold." [3]

But the delay was only for a couple of weeks, as the account states, "a number of gentlemen of this town [Georgetown] and the city of Washington formed themselves into a company and took upon themselves all the tickets remaining on hand on the express condition agreed to by the commissioners that the

[1] Answer of Thomas Munroe, superintendent of the city to the bill of complaint by Robert S. Bickley, Jan. 30, 1804. Transcript of Record Court of Appeals, D.C., April term, 1909, No. 1999, p. 150. Camp *vs.* devisees will of Caleb C. Willard. Reprinted from the record of the suit of Robert S. Bickley, the winner of the first prize in the hotel lottery filed Oct. 9, 1802. Circuit Court of the District.

[2] *Gazette of the United States*, July 17, 1793. It may be concluded, on account of the probable imaginative touch in the estimate of the number of people present, this report of the affair was inspired by Blodgett. The masonic lodge referred to was probably the Potomac of Georgetown.

[3] *Gazette of the United States*, Sept. 14, 1793. This account is curious and contributes evidence in support of the defence made by Blodgett in the subsequent legal proceedings that the lottery was an affair of the commissioners and that he was merely the agent.

drawing of the lottery should absolutely commence on the 23d inst. [September] and be continued without interruption."

The committee appointed to manage the concerns of the company were B. Stoddert, J. Mason, J. M. Lingan, M. Waring and T. Peter.[1]

The drawing of the lottery began on the 23d of September and was continued at first three days of each week, but it was not until the fall of 1794 the list of prizes was finally announced.[2] The circumstances surrounding this postponement of the drawing were probably of such a character as to arouse the suspicions of the commissioners and to cause them to feel uneasy about the results of the lottery. At any rate, they at once adopted a course to protect the city funds from possible loss, and the ready acquiescence in their demands by Messrs. Blodgett and Deakins furnishes a strong confirmation of the position which the commissioners assumed that the lottery was not their affair, but rested entirely on the responsibility of Blodgett and his associate.

Three days before the actual drawing began, namely, on the 20th of September, 1793, they obtained from Messrs. Blodgett and Deakins a legal declaration that the responsibility for the lottery and the payment of the prizes rested solely on Blodgett and that the commissioners were not answerable in any way. It was further agreed to execute any further instrument of writing the commissioners might desire, and in accordance with this latter stipulation Blodgett, on Jan. 28, 1794, four months later by deed conveyed to trustees all his property in the District and in addition 7160 shares, par value $10, of the stock of the Insurance Company of North America, of which he was a director, to secure the payment of the lottery prizes and to protect the commissioners from all loss or damages in consequence of the lottery.[3] In a few weeks after the lottery scheme re-

[1] In the issue of the *Gazette of the United States* of Sept. 14, 1793, appears a list of the names of the twenty-five managers to superintend the drawing, which includes nearly all those of the men then prominent as property holders in the new city.

[2] *Federal Gazette*, Oct. 21 and Nov. 9, 1794.

[3] District Land Records. B, folio 9.

ceived the sanction of the city authorities, Blodgett proposed to them, in view of the flattering prospects of the success of that undertaking and also because of a recent act of the Maryland legislature which forbade such enterprises, except by permission of the legislature, after the first of June of that year, that a second lottery be authorized. The commissioners gave their approval to this second enterprise and wrote to the president for his sanction.[1]

In the closing month of the previous year, the Virginia legislature placed on the statute books the first law relating to the new District that had come from that body. A charter was granted for a bank to be located in Alexandria, to be known as the Bank of Alexandria, having a capital of $150,000, increased to $350,000 in 1795. It is impossible to say to what extent this legislation was influenced by the fact that Alexandria was in the federal District. As the first bank, not only in the state of Virginia, but the second south of Philadelphia, the Bank of Maryland in Baltimore being the first, it appears on the face of it that such a distinction points to Alexandria as being the most important commercial centre in that state. The year before, however, and about eleven months after the location of the District had been determined, the citizens of Alexandria had vainly attempted to have a branch of the Bank of the United States, then just chartered by congress, opened in their town. Richmond and Norfolk also made similar fruitless application, so that it would seem when a year later the legislature of the state provided such a business facility for Alexandria alone, it might be inferred the recent change in the outlook for Alexandria had weight.[2] In less than a year after Ellicott

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, April 9, 1793.

[2] The stock was oversubscribed in less than two hours after the books were opened. Intending subscribers were informed their subscriptions must be accompanied with the specie for the number of shares they intended to take; if in gold, to be weighed, or in silver, to be counted and marked on the outside of the paper, in order to expedite the business (*Columbian Mirror*, Dec. 5 and 8, 1792). Philip R. Fendall was elected president, and Thomas Porter served as cashier for a few days, when he was succeeded by Gurden Chapin. The following constituted the first board of directors: Richard Conway,

had been placed at the head of the surveying department, his relations with the commissioners became so strained that on Jan. 8, 1793, he notified them that he would leave the service of the city on the first of the coming May. This was his response to a letter from the official heads of the city expressing their disappointment about the slow progress of the surveying work, and also, as it subsequently came out, they charged that errors had been made in the surveys. At any rate, the situation became so tense that on March 12, 1793, Ellicott and his corps of assistants, including at that time Isaac Briggs, Benjamin Ellicott and George Fenwick, were discharged.

In the course of a week or so, after this crisis had been reached, and before any further steps had been taken, Washington came to the city on one of the brief visits which became common in the early years and, as a result of a conversation with Ellicott, the purport of which he sent to the commissioners under date of April 3, 1793, Ellicott and his assistants returned to the service. It is evident from Washington's letter, that in addition to criticism of Ellicott's work on the part of the commissioners, they also complained he had been lacking in respect to his superiors.

As Ellicott assured Washington that his conduct of the work could be explained satisfactorily and that he meant no disrespect to the commissioners, Washington put it to the commissioners "whether an accommodation under all circumstances is not to be preferred to an open breach and a newspaper justification which will inevitably follow."

The order restoring Ellicott was dated April 9, 1793, less than a month after his discharge. Then on the 15th of April came an appointment to Ellicott from the governor of Pennsylvania to survey a road from Reading to Waterford in the western portion of the state, an undertaking of great responsibility as well as of peril, the latter due to the danger of Indian attacks.

William Hartshorne, Robert T. Hooe, William Wilson, William Herbert, Jonah Thompson and William Hodgson.

Details of the history of this bank are to be found in a paper entitled The Financial Institutions of Washington City in its Early Days. Charles E. Howe. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 8.

In this work he was occupied for the two ensuing years, and took no further part in the Washington enterprise.[1] The commissioners appointed no one in his place, and the office of chief of the surveying department was practically abolished and each surveyor was held responsible for the work intrusted to him.[2] The ability and skill of Major Ellicott in his calling had been established before he became identified with the city, and this call to another field was not the first one he had received, even in the short time of his service with the city as principal surveyor which, closing in the summer of 1793, lasted a little over a year. In the previous fall he had been employed by Robert Morris to verify the lines of a survey of land in the Phelps and Gorham tract in western New York which Mr. Morris had purchased. He was able to finish this task in a short time and return to his work in the city.[3]

One of the causes of Ellicott's discontent, as mentioned by

[1] "Major Ellicott, after his absence a great part of the summer and all the fall as we hear in other service, has returned to us in the winter. We do not accept his further services; the business, we believe, was going on full as well without him." Commissioners to Washington, Dec. 23, 1793. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] The progress made in the survey of the city up to practically the end of Ellicott's service is given in a statement made to the commissioners by James R. Dermott, Feb. 28, 1799 (Papers of Commissioners). He stated that the principal part of the work done until July or August, 1792, was confined to the section of the city beginning at Rock Creek and bounded on the north by a line along M Street thence south on 15th Street to G, thence to 3d Street, W., to the canal and with the latter and the Potomac and Rock Creek to the point of beginning. Of the work to the eastward of the capitol he states there was nothing done permanently for some time afterwards.

[3] Andrew Ellicott. Catherine Van Cortlandt Mathews, p. 70, New York, 1908. It may be interesting to note that some years later, when Benjamin Ellicott, who continued in the service of the city after his brother left it, was employed to make a plan for the laying out of Buffalo, N.Y., introduced a suggestion of the feature of the Washington plan, namely, avenues radiating from a centre. The plan of the city of Detroit is the only other city plan in the United States that shows the influence of the scheme followed in Washington and that was due to Augustus B. Woodward, a resident of Washington in its early days and who was appointed judge of the territory of Michigan.

Washington in his correspondence with the commissioners, was due to unfriendly relations with James R. Dermott, who had been given employment by the commissioners in the surveying department about the time Ellicott was placed in charge. Dermott was then a teacher in an academy in Alexandria. His selection was made on the recommendation of Dr. Stuart, who was also practically a citizen of that place. For some reason which is not now known, Mr. Dermott continued to be a storm centre in the surveying department, although in the case of Andrew Ellicott the records show that Dermott was the author of the charge of imperfections in his work.[1]

After Ellicott left the city, Dermott was placed in exclusive charge of dividing the squares into lots. He was the author of the plan of the city known as the Tin Case Map, which was sent to congress by President Adams.

The friction in the surveying department had scarcely been allayed for the time, when the president was notified by Commissioners Johnson and Stuart of their wish to be relieved from the duties of their positions. Washington mentions this circumstance as a reason for hastening the closing up of the lottery business, as they did not wish to leave the service until that was out of the way. He further explains in a letter, dated Aug. 29, 1793, to the commissioners that Mr. Johnson's motive for leaving was a desire to avail himself of opportunities for private business, "for he thinks he or anybody else cannot act for the public and himself." As Mr. Johnson, on retiring to private life, became the purchaser of sundry lots in the city of Washington, it might be inferred that Washington real estate offered the opportunities he had in mind. No reason is assigned for Dr. Stuart's retirement.

Great preparations were made to fix public attention upon the sale of lots to be held in the fall of 1793. At that time the corner-stone of the capitol was to be laid. In the meantime the

[1] Early Maps and Surveyors of the City of Washington. John Stewart, C. E. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2. In the J. Henley Smith Papers, Library of Congress, is a letter of Andrew Ellicott to Dr. Thornton, Feb. 23, 1795.

work of building the Great Hotel was being pushed, so that the visitors attracted to the city on that occasion might see the progress made with that structure as well as with the president's house and be encouraged to have a part in the new venture by buying lots.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE EARLY REALTY OPERATORS

In spite of the skilful focussing of attractive events about the date of the sale of lots in September, 1793, purchasers were in no greater numbers than on previous occasions. The president not only attended the sale but he became the purchaser of four lots on the Eastern Branch, "the doing of which," he explains in a letter to the commissioners dated March 14, 1794, "was more the result of accident than premeditation and being unwilling, from that circumstance, it should be believed that I had greater predilection to the southern part of the city, I proposed the next day, the sale being continued, to buy a like number of lots in Hamburg, Square 21."

The president was, of course, the principal figure in the ceremonies, more elaborate in character than anything of the sort witnessed in the new city, at the laying of the corner-stone of the north wing of the capitol building. The Virginia artillery was conspicuous and the masonic lodges of Alexandria, Georgetown and Washington were present in their appropriate regalia, while two bands supplied the music. The procession formed at the President's Square and marched thence to the capitol, but not along the now historic thoroughfare of Pennsylvania Avenue but probably over the new post road that followed in part what is now the line of F Street. A short distance west from the capitol site, the procession reached the banks of the Tiber and there, at the fording place, the regular order was broken, while the individuals composing the procession crossed "the rude bridge formed of a single log" or "a little above by a few large stones." [1]

The ceremonies were in charge of Joseph Clark, master of Lodge No. 12, of Annapolis, acting as grand master. According

[1] Recollections of George Wattertson. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 26, 1847.

to tradition General Washington laid the stone, the grand master having delegated to him the authority.[1]

The address of the grand master was punctuated by volleys fired by an artillery company of the militia. At the close of the exercises the company was refreshed at a barbecue of an ox weighing five hundred pounds, served in a large booth erected near the site of the new building.[2] The lack of buyers at the sale of lots no doubt was largely accounted for by the depressed state of business and the tightness of the money market, reflecting the unsettled condition in Europe. In addition the commissioners had trouble in collecting the deferred payments on the lots previously sold.

"We are sorry to inform you," they write to the secretary of state, "that there has not only been a great want of punctuality among those who purchased at the first sale in the second payment, but even among those who were purchasers at the last, of their first advance." [3]

But as the principal source of revenue was dried up when there was no market for lots and the efforts to procure a loan had failed, the situation was one of difficulty. Just at this critical time a way appeared to be opened through the appearance on the scene of James Greenleaf, a young man of twenty-seven years, belonging to a prominent Massachusetts family. He had a letter of introduction to the commissioners from the president, who informed them that "Mr. Greenleaf was a native of Boston, who has resided for some years past in Amsterdam, and has lately been appointed consul for the United States at Amsterdam."

[1] History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, Washington, 1911, p. 22. The gavel said to have been used by Washington on this occasion is still preserved by Potomac Lodge No. 5, the successor of Lodge No. 9 of Georgetown.

[2] *Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette.* Sept. 25, 1793. In "The Lodge of Washington. A history of the Alexandria Washington Lodge, No. 22, A. F. and A. M. of Alexandria, Va." F. L. Brockett, Alexandria, 1876, it is stated that Washington acted as the master of Alexandria Lodge on this occasion.

[3] Commissioners to secretary of state. Dec. 5, 1792, State Department, D.C., Papers.

"This gentleman, I understand, has it in contemplation to make certain proposals to you for building a number of houses in the federal city provided he can have lots upon such terms and conditions as may correspond with his interest in the undertaking, while it tends, at the same time, to promote the great object of the city. . . . He has been represented to me as a gentleman of large property and having the command of much money in this country and in Europe. But I can say nothing on this head from my own knowledge." [1]

"Having had occasion to make enquiry respecting him before his appointment to the office of consul, the accounts which I received were highly favorable to Mr. Greenleaf, both as to the respectability of his connections in this country and in Holland where he married and as to his own character. I have reason to believe that if you can find it consistent with your duty to the public to attach Mr. Greenleaf to the federal city, he will be a valuable acquisition." [2] As the result of this visit Greenleaf made an offer to buy three thousand lots, and a few days after the public sale, namely, on the 23d of September, 1793, the commissioners entered into a formal agreement with him for the sale of that quantity at $66.50 per lot of an average of 5265 square feet each, to be paid in seven annual instalments without interest beginning on the first of the following May. The purchaser was to erect ten houses of specified size yearly for seven years. No sales were to be made by Greenleaf before Jan. 1, 1796, except on the condition that on every third lot sold a house should be built within four years following the date of the sale.

But in the then state of affairs the clause in the agreement which was perhaps looked upon by the commissioners as of great importance was the one that obligated Greenleaf individ-

[1] In the year 1796 Greenleaf claimed that his estate could be liquidated at the rate of a million a year for five years, and later on spoke of his "ample fortune" as all gone except "the waste and worthless paper" of his two associates in the Washington venture. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 173.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Aug. 20, 1793. State Department, D.C., Papers.

ually to furnish the commissioners $2200 each month as a loan at 6 per cent, and to continue such supplies of money until the public buildings were completed. While in Holland in 1788 Greenleaf had negotiated a loan with the Dutch bankers based on American securities. He also while there gained a Dutch wife. Now that he was to return to that country in an official capacity, with his acquaintance there already established, he was, in his own esteem as well as that of others, looked upon as a potent influence in Dutch financial circles.

The previous year he had joined Robert Morris, the wealthiest man of the day in the United States and prominent in public affairs during and since the war of the revolution, in one of the series of extensive land purchases that Morris had undertaken when American independence had been established, in the expectation of a great rise in land values due to the tide of emigration which he confidently believed would set in to this country. Morris became a silent partner in the agreement made at this time by Greenleaf with the commissioners, taking on his account one third of the lots, but not assuming any responsibility for the loan, which Greenleaf had engaged to make for the commissioners.[1]

Greenleaf's confidence in his ability to float a loan in Holland on the Washington property, as it opened a prospect of a further supply of money from the same source, proved so attractive to Morris that he decided to enlarge the scope of his enterprise in that city.[2]

This was accomplished in a second agreement made two months later with the commissioners under date of Dec. 24, 1793,[3] in which Morris appeared with Greenleaf as prin-

[1] Robert Morris to President Washington, Sept. 21, 1795. Quoted in Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 114.

[2] "Our embarrassments have arisen from another source. Mr. Greenleaf is under contract with his hand and seal to provide us with money to carry through the operations, which, at his instance, we were tempted to undertake, but the French invasion of Holland put it out of his power to fulfill. The failure being occasioned by public events . . . he, in some degree, has been a sharer." The same.

[3] Liber B, folio 541. Recorder of Deeds.

cipals, and the former's associate in many of his land transactions, John Nicholson, was to be joined with the purchasers as surety in a certain event. It is probable also that Nicholson was equally interested in the first agreement, although, as in the case of Morris, his name was not used.[1] By the terms of the second agreement the commissioners sold six thousand lots instead of three. The conditions in the new agreement as to credit, building and selling were the same as in the first, except that the price was averaged up to $80 per lot. The building requirement was doubled, so that the purchasers were to build twenty instead of ten houses yearly for a period of seven years, and no title was to be given by the commissioners unless first all the terms were complied with. In these particulars the transaction was lifted above the range of a mere speculative venture.

A suggestion of the latter character may be traced in the proviso allowing Morris and Greenleaf to associate in the whole purchase one or more persons without entailing on them the obligations to build imposed on ordinary buyers, thus allowing an enlargement of the membership of the syndicate, a privilege not made use of except to bring in Mr. Nicholson as principal. The interests of the city were safeguarded, especially when the character and the high financial standing of the three men are taken into consideration, as probably no men at that period were in better repute, especially in the money market.

However, it was essentially a speculation as far as the purchasers were concerned, and if the outcome had been a success, their shrewdness and foresight would no doubt have been celebrated even after the lapse of more than a century. As it is, the actors in these opening years of the existence of the city have come under the shadow of the cloud of disaster and failure which marks this period, and their achievements, as well as the manner of men they were, have been so obscured as to be almost impossible to revive even in faint outlines.

[1] John Nicholson held at that time, as he had for many years, the important office of controller-general of the state of Pennsylvania. He was a close personal friend of Morris, and like him was engaged

At the time, these big operators expected to realize rapidly on their investment and their confidence is shown by the readiness with which they accepted the rather stiff terms of the commissioners.[1]

What Washington thought of the first transaction is expressed in a letter to Tobias Lear of Sept. 25, 1793, in which he says he thinks Greenleaf has made "very advantageous terms for himself and I am pleased with it, notwithstanding on public ground, as it may give facility to the operations at that place, at the same time that it is embarking him and his friends in a measure which, although it could not well fail under any circumstances that are likely to happen, may considerably be promoted by men of spirit with large capitals."

In a letter to Washington explaining the enlarged agreement entered into with Morris and Greenleaf, the commissioners state "a consideration of the uncertainty of settled times and an embarrassed commerce weighed much with us as well as Mr. Morris's capital, influence and activity. The statement of funds enclosed may enable the prosecution of the work even in a war, in which event we should, without this contract, have been almost still." [2]

The benefit to the city was felt to be an immediate one, and at the beginning a spirit of coöperation was manifested by both parties to the agreement, which no doubt would have continued to mark the intercourse, if financial embarrassments and the attendant evils had not intervened. It had just then been discovered that the projection of rock into the river a short distance southwest of the president's house, a favorite landing

extensively in buying land. They were associated in a large number of transactions. He was also one of the wealthy men of that day.

[1] "Nobody can suppose that Mr. Nicholson or myself entered into these engagements with an expectation of holding the property. It was from the beginning and is now our intention to sell when it can be done to our satisfaction, and I believe the interest of the city will be more certainly promoted by interesting a number of individuals, than by any one or two men continuing to hold a large number of lots." Morris to Washington, Sept. 21, 1795. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 114.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, Dec. 23, 1793.

place known as the Key of all Keys, and also later on as Braddock's Rock, would make excellent foundation stone, and in fact it was from this source that the greater portion of the stone used in the foundation walls of the capitol and the president's house was taken.[1]

The commissioners promised to let Greenleaf have the use of a part of this stone. They also expressed the intention "to interest him in the quarries at Acquia, he benefiting us in the use of the brick machine." [2]

Enlisting the interest of three such men in the new city, and especially when one of them was Robert Morris, and the prospect of building activity and the bringing in of new men and abundance of money were no doubt bright and alluring both to the city officials and to individual owners. This would have been the case largely even if the transaction had been confined to acquiring more than half of the public lots.[3]

But while Greenleaf was in the city negotiating the terms of the second agreement with the commissioners he purchased on behalf of the syndicate nearly seven hundred lots from Daniel Carroll and Notley Young. During the ensuing twelve months he made further purchases from individuals, so that the total reached 1234 lots, making altogether 7234 lots under their control in the city of Washington.[4]

[1] "Before the day of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal it [Key of all Keys] was a large and bold projection into the river. . . . When the C and O canal was constructed through this part of Washington, the tow path was filled in through the water in the river and in order to make it, it became necessary to blast and remove a large portion of this rock." Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 166, Vol. 11.

[2] Commissioners to Washington, Dec. 23, 1793. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[3] The lots owned by the public were estimated at this time to be 10,136, while a similar number were in the hands of the proprietors. Washington in Embryo, Washington, 1874.

[4] Morris's own account of his holdings was given in his statement of his property printed without date or place after his financial collapse and is as follows as relating to the Washington property.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| From the Commissioners | 6000 | lots |
| From Notley Young | 428½ | lots |
| From Daniel Carroll | 220 | lots |

Several tracts of acreage property on the south side of the Eastern Branch were also acquired in the interests of the syndicate as well as near the Great Falls.[1] The terms of the agreement provided for only the customary credit for the principals. But hardly had the enlarged paper been signed than Greenleaf broached the subject of an extension in that particular. As early as Dec. 23, 1793, the commissioners in a letter to Washington state they desire to comply with Greenleaf's wish to secure title to a portion of the lots before they are paid for. They had therefore concluded that if Morris and Greenleaf together with Nicholson would join in a bond to secure the payment of the money, they would be justified in substituting personal security for real estate. It is evident Washington gave his approval, and in this way the purchasers obtained title to large blocks of lots for which they had not paid.[2] Apparently about the same time Greenleaf came to the city, Tobias Lear, who had then but recently given up the position of secretary to the president after a service of eight years, carried

| | |
|---|---|
| Lands called the Hop-yard | 119½ lots |
| From Forrest and Stoddert | 239¼ lots |
| From William King | 108 lots |
| From William Bagely | 79½ lots |
| From Cazenove [Peter] and French [George] | 40 lots |
| Total lots | 7234¾ lots |

[1] In a letter to Washington, Dec. 23, 1793, the commissioners state "Messrs. Greenleaf and Morris do not bound themselves to the city; they have embraced the Great Falls and seem desirous of acquiring on other parts of the Patomac." Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] The commissioners writing to Robert Morris, Dec. 23, 1793, in regard to Greenleaf's transaction on their joint behalf express the feeling that the terms "will be so pleasing as to insure your aid to the degree we expect and which we have contemplated with confidence." They also speak with satisfaction of his expressed intention to send his son to the city to represent the interests of the purchasers. However, William Morris did not take the agency in this city as was proposed. William Cranch, then a young man twenty-five years of age, a brother-in-law of Greenleaf and a nephew of Mrs. John Adams, wife of the vice-president of the United States, became the Washington agent in the fall of 1794. Samuel Eliot, a nephew of Greenleaf and of Mrs. Cranch, came to the city at the same time and was employed as the bookkeeper of the syndicate. In later years he became the cashier of the Bank of Washington.

out what was evidently a long-cherished plan, — to embark in business and identify his fortunes with that of the infant city. As early as the year 1791 he had asked L'Enfant to purchase for him a lot in Washington and the record shows that he became the owner of Lot 4, Square 105 (north side of H Street between 18th and 19th streets, N. W.) in October of that year. It is reasonable to suppose that during the intervening two years he had kept in close touch with the course of affairs in the new city.

It is also a reasonable conjecture that, being in Philadelphia and on terms of intimacy with the leading men there, he was familiar with the plans of Messrs. Morris and Greenleaf. At any rate, when he did come to the new city to establish himself in business, Greenleaf became associated with him. Lear brought with him a letter of introduction from Washington to the commissioners. The president in this letter informed the commissioners that Lear with others contemplated founding in the federal city a mercantile establishment and desired to acquire a suitable site.[1]

A firm was formed under the name of Lear and Company, composed of Tobias Lear, Tristam Dalton and James Greenleaf.[2] A site for a wharf was secured on Square 9 between 26th Street and the Potomac and F and G streets, and a stone warehouse was erected there. The firm also owned a square on the west side of Rock Creek in Georgetown, bounded by M, Olive, 27th and Rock Creek, and two lots on the Eastern Branch between S and T streets, S. W. In the fall of 1794 their business had reached such proportions that Dalton decided to make his home in the new city, but the vessel containing his furniture and library was destroyed by fire in Chesapeake Bay. The personal effects of William Cranch were in this vessel and were destroyed.[3] It was during the year 1793 that the first book

[1] Washington to the Commissioners, June 13, 1793. War Department Manuscripts.

[2] Dalton was a native of Newburyport, Mass., and inherited large means. He served his native state in various capacities and represented it in the first congress as member of the senate.

[3] Tobias Lear to James Greenleaf, Oct. 31, 1794. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 147. The same authority also states that

appeared relating to the new District. It was written by Tobias Lear, no doubt with the encouragement of Washington.[1]

The closing days of the year 1793 must have been an encouraging period for those interested in the new city, and the influence of the change in the outlook of the enterprise brought about by the transaction with Morris and Greenleaf extended over the months of the coming year. A sidelight on what was regarded as the future of the city is found in one of the clauses of the second agreement with the syndicate, in which a restriction is placed upon the range of choice in the selection of the lots lying to the northeast of Massachusetts Avenue. By this proviso the purchasers were excluded from selecting lots in "one half of the squares which shall adjoin the spot that may be appropriated for a national university which is expected to be fixed on the northeast side of said avenue." [2]

In a letter to the commissioners, dated Dec. 1, 1793, Washington expresses his surprise that any allusion to such a measure should have found its way into the agreement. "A university," he adds, "was not even contemplated by Major L'Enfant in the plan of the city which was laid before Congress; taking its origin from another source."

Another indication of the prospective importance of the new city was the establishment of a bank through the charter by the Maryland legislature, Dec. 28, 1793, of the Bank of Columbia. This was the second institution of the sort authorized

Greenleaf retired from the firm prior to 1798, in which year a plan of liquidation was adopted as disclosed in a chancery bill asking for a sale of the real estate above mentioned. The firm then consisted of Tristam Dalton, Tobias Lear, Jonathan Hobson, John Coles and Robert E. Griffith, the last three being non-residents. *Centinel of Liberty*, June 3, 1800.

[1] Observations on the River Potomac, the Country Adjacent, and the City of Washington. New York, 1793. It was published anonymously, but Mr. Lear's authorship is clearly established. At one time it was attributed to Andrew Ellicott. A second edition with additional matter was published in London in 1794.

[2] This proposed location was the vicinity of the juncture of Massachusetts Avenue and New York Avenue, between 6th and 9th streets, as shown in a letter from the commissioners to Alexander White, Jan. 27, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book.

by that state. As shown by the provision allowing the city commissioners to subscribe for not more than 2000 of the 10,000 shares authorized, par value $100, the bank was largely intended to facilitate the business of the city.[1]

Seven months previous, the Bank of Alexandria began business, but that institution never came into very close relations with city affairs. The Bank of Columbia was organized for the special purpose of handling the paper of the commissioners as well as of the lot buyers. There was a close community of interests between the city management and this institution, as indicated by the shares taken by the city as well as by the personnel of the incorporators. For example, Samuel Blodgett, the late supervisor of the city, became the first president; William Deakins, Jr., the treasurer of the board, was an incorporator, and so were Uriah Forrest, John Mason, James M. Lingan, Benjamin Stoddert, William B. Magruder and Thomas Peter. The bank was located at first at the northeast corner of 29th and M streets, and after an existence of some eleven years the erection was begun on the north side of M Street, between Wisconsin Avenue and 34th Street, of a commodious bank building, which continued to be its home until its doors were closed. The building was sold in the year 1827.[2] By the close of the year 1795, $40 had been actually paid in on each share, and by an act of the Maryland legislature (Dec. 26, 1795), the forfeiture clause of the original act for non-payment of instalments was repealed, and partially paid shares were given the same rights as to dividends as those fully paid.

[1] The commissioners subscribed for 1053 shares, on which, according to their report on city affairs to the president, Jan. 29, 1795, $30 per share had been paid up to Oct. 1, 1794. If the payments required by the charter were made, which were $10 per share annually after the first six months following the election of directors, when $30 was required to be paid on each share, then the institution was organized in January, 1794, a few days after the charter was granted. The extent to which the bank was used by the commissioners is shown by a statement in this report that there was due to the bank previous to Jan. 29, 1795, the sum of $35,250 for treasurer's notes discounted, which is within a few hundred dollars equal to the commissioners' capital stock subscription.

[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 10, Vol. 8.

Another event of consequence occurred in the same month in the starting of a newspaper in Georgetown. It is probable the town had been then, for a few weeks, without a local paper, as it is supposed the *Georgetown Weekly Ledger* ceased to appear after October, 1793, thus closing its career as the second paper to be printed in Georgetown, after an existence of about two and one half years. The new candidate for public favor was the *Columbian Chronicle*, printed every Tuesday and Friday by Hanson and Priestley. The day in December, 1793, when it made its initial bow is not known, and there is equal uncertainty about the date of the last issue. The issue of Aug. 11, 1795, bears the name of Samuel Hanson alone as publisher.[1]

For more than two years the affairs of the city had been in the hands of the commissioners, who had received and expended the money without any supervision except the very general one which the president had been able to bestow. While the president had given and continued to give a remarkable degree of attention to city affairs, yet of course it was impossible to extend it thoroughly to the details. Now that two of the members of the board, Messrs. Johnson and Stuart, intended to retire from the city management in the coming fall, they evidently felt that some inspection and auditing of their accounts should be had.

When such a suggestion was made by the commissioners to the president, the latter at once appointed David Ross of Bladensburg and Robert T. Hooe of Alexandria to perform this duty. Their report was in the hands of the president on the 31st of October, 1793. The accounts were found to be correct. It was stated that the total receipts up to that time were $167,000, and that of this amount only $16,000 had come from the sale of the city property. The Maryland grant of $72,000 had been paid, and of the Virginia grant of $120,000 all but one third had

[1] New Jersey Archives, 1st Series, Vol. XI. Edited by William Nelson, who appends to the account of this paper the following note: "Was Dr. Joseph Priestley one of the publishers? He arrived in America in June, 1794, but proceeded directly to Northumberland, Pa." Harvard University Library file of this paper is Feb. 3, 1795, No. 120, to May 10, 1796, No. 251.

been received, including an order on that state counted as cash. The cash on hand was $18,000.[1]

The showing made by these figures was improved in the course of a few weeks by the prospect opened up through the agreement made with Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf. But even with such an outlook, the disparity remained between what was contemplated and the resources available. An instance of this is to be found in a letter written some six months later to Greenleaf and in reply to a suggestion that the commissioners ought to include in their plans for the city some system of sewers, or drains as they were termed. While admitting the healthfulness and other advantages of such improvements, yet they add, "But set to build a city without funds, what can we do?" [2]

There is, however, but little trace of discouragement or loss of confidence to be found in the official conduct of those in charge of city affairs. An evidence of adherence to a high standard of city arrangement and living is to be found in a letter written by the commissioners as early as June 25, 1793. It was addressed to Daniel Carroll of Duddington, and stated that "it is very desirable that many ornamental trees should be left in the Mall. Fearing that cutting any part at present may lead to consequences which cannot be repaired in many years, if at all, we wish to treat with you for the purchase of all the trees standing in the Mall, so that the whole may be left standing till a settled design is formed and entered on for partially clearing that part of the city." [3] As the pioneer in the long procession of plans for city improvement, this suggestion has an interest, but unfortunately it was not followed up, and Mr. Carroll and other property owners removed the trees which were said to have been thickly distributed over the site of the city.[4]

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Oct. 31, 1793. There is no record of another audit of the accounts of the commissioners until the board was abolished in the year 1802.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, July 10, 1794.

[3] The same.

[4] The right to the growing wood was expressly reserved to the property holders in their deeds to the United States, except such as the commissioners might select and pay for. But money neither for trees

To this period may be traced the first appearance of the citizens of the new city in another relation than that of land holders, for the commissioners were "petitioned by sundry inhabitants of the city of Washington requesting permission to erect a temporary schoolhouse on one of the public lots." [1] The petition was granted, but there is no further record of the school.

A change which was of consequence owing to the sensitive sectional feeling in the city was the substitution of Washington city for Georgetown in the head-line of the official letters of the commissioners. This was begun in January, 1794, and on the 25th of March, 1794, it is recorded for the first time in the proceedings of the commissioners "at a meeting of the commissioners in the city of Washington." [2]

As early as the middle of April, 1792, the commissioners decided to build a house for the accommodation of their office "near the place called the Church Square" or near the Great Hotel, but there was some doubt of the propriety of such an application of the public money, and furthermore it was concluded to await the completion of the hotel building and locate the office there.[3]

It is impossible to know whether or not the official letterhead of that period designated the legal or the physical abode of the commissioners or both. At any rate, the hotel building was not occupied, and it is doubtful that the office was removed to Washington for several years.

The latter part of January, 1794, marked the close of a year's service of Blodgett as supervisor, and the commissioners notified him that the engagement would not be renewed. The dismissal

nor for drains or for hardly any other purpose except the actual needs at the time was not available at that or at any other period in the early days of the city.

[1] Proceedings of the Commissioners, Oct. 16, 1793.

[2] At that time the commissioners directed that $146 be paid "for one year's rent of Mr. Peter's house for the use of an office for the commissioners ending the 26th of this month" [March, 1794]. This had reference, of course, to the office in Georgetown.

[3] Letter of Daniel Carroll, April 16, 1792. Also of Washington to Gustavus Scott, July 4, 1796. State Department, D.C., Papers.

was expressed in terms indicating appreciation of the value of his assistance. But it was pointed out that the improbability of his becoming a resident of the city, his private business and especially that of the hotel lottery engaging his attention made his longer continuance impracticable. He was told that his affection for the city and his interest in its prosperity were assurances to them that he would continue to render any aid in his power.

Three months later, however, the esteem and consideration expressed in this letter were exchanged for quite a different sentiment, as the commissioners then wrote "unhappily we have to do with a man who has lost our confidence. Instead of certainty we have to guess at the state of things." [1]

Washington also shared in this feeling towards Blodgett, for he wrote on the 23d of January, 1794, to Commissioner Johnson: "With respect to Mr. Blodgett, I have not hesitated on former occasions to declare, and I think to the commissioners themselves, from the moment his conduct began to unfold itself, that his appointment did not in my judgment answer the end which had been contemplated. At first I was at a loss to account for a conduct so distant from any idea which I had entertained of the duties of a superintendent, but it appears evidently enough now, that speculation has been his primary object from the beginning. . . . I wish you may have yet seen the worst features in Mr. Blodgett's conduct. . . . Little confidence I fear is placed in Mr. Blodgett, and least where he is best known." [2]

The change had been as rapid as it was complete, for a few months previously he had been in high favor and Washington records that he was accompanied by Blodgett at the time of the sale of lots in the previous fall as he inspected the site of the new city. But his lottery scheme, the drawing of which had been begun the previous fall, was not then concluded, and in addition he had announced his intention to start Federal Lottery No. 2, in face of the change in the attitude of the president and

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, April 23, 1794.

[2] Washington to Thomas Johnson. Writings of Washington. Ford.

the commissioners, who now opposed what they formerly sanctioned.[1]

It is difficult at this distance of time, and especially in the dim light about the career of a man whose latter years were clouded with reverses and the final defeat of his plans, to understand fully the causes of such a complete change in his standing as is here set forth. The ostensible cause of the irritation felt both by Washington and the commissioners was the second lottery scheme in face of the failure of the first. At first favored, in a few months it met with sharp repudiation from the city authorities, who saw in the term "Federal Lottery No. 2" an attempt to give the enterprise an official character.

Up to this time there is no record of an act of Blodgett in connection with the city indicating that he was unscrupulous or dishonest. All his undertakings in the new city were those of a man of means, and also one of enthusiasm and large ideals. His writings, mainly on economic subjects, clearly conveyed the impression of these traits. At the same time his work does not reveal the profound student nor the deep thinker. His mind tended to discursiveness and broad generalizations, and in that particular he was not fitted to handle practical affairs. In his case when the dark days came, his qualities of mind and methods rather served to add to his financial complications, but there is no strong evidence to show deliberate fraud on his part.

The scheme of Federal Lottery No. 2, as Blodgett clung to the name, was formally made known in the summer of 1794,

[1] "The commissioners were no farther concerned in the hotel lottery than to give a naked permission for it; and a second has lately been advertised in Angel and Sullivan's Baltimore paper under the description No. 2. Whether it complies with the laws of this state does not concern us, but as from the manner of the publication the public may possibly infer that the lottery is raised with the approbation of the commissioners and that they will attend to the conduct of it, we think proper to declare that we have given no countenance to the publishing or carrying the lottery nor will have anything to do with the conduct of it." Notice to the public signed by the commissioners, *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, Aug. 23, 1794.

when it was announced the drawing would commence December 22 following.[1]

The prizes offered were houses to be built in Washington. The first prize was to be a house to cost $30,000. They were to be erected on two squares, four corner houses and two in the centre. One location was the square to the south of the capitol grounds which Mr. Blodgett had purchased. The total amount to be raised was $400,000.

A characteristic feature of the prospectus of Lottery No. 2 was the announcement that the surplus, after paying the prizes, would be made a part of the fund intended for the national university to be erected within the city of Washington.[2]

But another characteristic feature was a deed of trust given by Blodgett on all his property in the city of Washington to secure the payment of the prizes. This instrument was executed July 7, 1795, while on the 28th of January of the previous year Blodgett had conveyed to trustees the same property to secure the payment of the prizes in Lottery No. 1. As Benjamin Stoddert, one of the trustees named in the trust for Lottery No. 2, explained in his sworn statement in the Bickley suit, the trust he represented was only intended to apply to what remained of the property after the first trust had been satisfied. The hotel lottery No. 1 drawing was finally concluded in the fall of 1794.[3]

Robert S. Bickley of Philadelphia was found to be the holder of the ticket to which the first prize had fallen. He had paid $11 for his chance, although the price as given in the lottery prospectus was $8, which indicates the enterprise had excited some speculation. The hotel building was never completed, and the holder of the prize ticket began suit in the year 1798 in Philadelphia, where Blodgett resided. The supreme court of that

[1] The *Virginia Gazette and Richmond and Manchester Advertiser*, July 31, 1794.

[2] The entire scheme of this lottery is to be found in the *Columbian Chronicle*, Feb. 3, 1795. The drawing was never completed, although there are references to it as late as the year 1799.

[3] *Federal Gazette*, Oct. 21 and Nov. 9, 1794. The list of prizes is given.

state on Dec. 26, 1801, rendered a judgment that Bickley was entitled to the hotel building and also to $21,500, this sum being the difference between the estimated value of the building as it then stood and the stipulated value of the prize, which was $50,000. In the year 1802 a suit was instituted in the circuit court of the District to collect this judgment by the sale of the property owned by Blodgett in the District. A decree of sale was made Oct. 4, 1805. A sale of the property followed, but the proceeds not being sufficient to satisfy the judgment, further sales were decreed by the court, Nov. 5, 1813, which included the balance of the Blodgett holdings.

Bickley became the purchaser, and all the property was deeded to him. More than sixty years later suits were brought by persons as the heirs of Blodgett, claiming title to property in this city, but without result.[1]

The impression evidently prevailed at the time that the hotel lottery was mismanaged, but this charge was denied by Blodgett in a letter to Dr. Thornton, written about the time his official connection with the city ceased. "There was never a lottery in this country," he writes, "for more than half the amount. No, sir," he continues in playful terms, "although you understand the building of federal cities, capitols, anatomy, painting, botany and the belle lettres and such trifles, give me leave to assure you that you are not yet sufficiently instructed in the more noble and more exalted science of lottery making." [2]

The lottery was undoubtedly, like all Blodgett's schemes, on an elaborate scale, as the total amount to be raised by it was $350,000. It might also be added that the entire amount received from the sale of tickets was to be given in prizes, and "if the necessary expenses should be taken from the principal prize," the advertisement announced, "a quantity of excellent

[1] A history of the Blodgett claim is to be found in a pamphlet, Land Titles in the District of Columbia. Letter of M. Ashford, Esq., giving the record history of the Blodgett claim so called. [Washington, 1892.]

[2] Samuel Blodgett to Dr. Thornton, Jan. 5, 1794. J. Henley Smith collection.

stone will be given sufficient to complete the whole building as an indemnification." [1]

The opening of the new year, 1794, was accompanied with preparations for an active building season. In a sense not intended by those who characterized the Potomac site in the first congress as "a wilderness" some of the conditions of a remote locality hampered the early operations in the new city. The demand for building materials and workmen went beyond the ordinary supplies of such a place. As to the former the sandstone quarries at Acquia furnished the stone needed for the exterior walls of the two public buildings, while the abundance of clay suitable for brickmaking at the sites of the proposed buildings supplied an easy solution of the brick problem. Lumber and lime had to be brought to the spot, the latter mainly from the north, while a contract made with General Henry Lee, Light Horse Harry, the father of General Robert E. Lee, brought from the hills of Stafford County, Va., supplies of white oak and yellow poplar.

The most serious difficulty was getting mechanics, for as to unskilled labor the services of slaves were purchased from the owners living in the vicinity and throughout Maryland and Virginia. But artisans were hard to get, and the commissioners advertised in Europe and wrote to agents there. Jefferson, with that wonderful versatility which balked at no subject, pointed out to the commissioners in a letter the feasibility of securing mechanics from Europe, but it was found later on, as the flames of war overspread those countries, that emigration was practically prohibited, as all able-bodied men were needed at home.

As an encouragement to foreign mechanics to come to the city, the commissioners offered to advance the passage-money, to be repaid in instalments from the wages.

[1] In the sworn statement of Blodgett in the chancery suit of Robert S. Bickley, circuit court of the District, Aug. 15, 1804, he states he gave the commissioners a bond to secure the payment of the money prizes and the money assigned for the hotel that might pass through his hands, but denies that the bond was intended to meet the cost of the hotel. However, this contention was not sustained by the courts.

The use of slave labor whose hire was paid to the masters and was exclusive of their keep, which was a charge upon the employer, made it necessary to provide shelter as well as food, and also a hospital, so that early in the year 1794, a building of the latter sort was erected on Judiciary Square. It is interesting to note as an indication of the persistence of ideas as to uses of a number of the public spaces, that the name Judiciary Square is used in the official proceedings of the commissioners at this time, although it was not formally set apart as a reservation until some four years later.[1]

The overseer of the workmen was directed "to keep the yearly hirelings at work from sunrise to sunset, particularly the negoes." During the month of August and the first half of September each man employed in getting out foundation stone at the Key of all Keys was served daily with half a pint of whiskey.

In the summer of 1794, the commissioners reported that private building had begun in the city. There is another evidence that a centre of population was forming in the organization of churches. In the spring of that year Rev. John Brackenridge began his labors that soon resulted in gathering a congregation that bore the name of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and which continued in existence until a short time after the year 1800. The location of the church building cannot be precisely determined, but it was on the square bounded by F, G, 10th and 11th streets, N. W.[2] In the square to the east in April, 1794, Rev. Anthony Caffry bought from the commissioners lots on the north side of F Street, between 9th and 10th streets, where the first edifice of St. Patrick's Catholic

[1] Dr. John Crocker was appointed physician to attend the laborers, then numbering about forty-six, at a compensation of $67 per annum. Proceedings of Commissioners, April 15, 1794. The position evidently had its attraction, for on May 2, 1797, applications were received for this appointment from Drs. Wrenn, Gantt, Frederick May, W. B. Williams and John Crocker. Dr. May was chosen, and the next year his pay was changed from an annual lump sum to 50 cents per head "or the usual charge for that class of patients and the usual charge for medicines used."

[2] The Beginnings of the Presbyterian Church in the District of Columbia. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 8.

Church was erected and, as is conjectured, shortly after the site was secured.

Washington Parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church was created by act of the Maryland legislature of Dec. 26, 1794, and the vestry and rector of Christ Church were chosen May 25th following, services being held in a building on New Jersey Avenue, near D Street, S. E.[1]

An additional circumstance showing the sanguine hopes of the period is found in the objections raised by the commissioners in the spring of 1794 to the property holders planting their lands in the vicinity of Greenleaf's Point with corn "as tending to obscure the view for possible purchasers." They had no objection, however, to such a crop as oats. Until the city officials acquired the land to be used for public purposes or had occasion to dispose of public lots, the landowners were allowed to continue the cultivation of the soil.

The spring and summer of 1794 was the period of perhaps the greatest activity on the part of Greenleaf in developing the Washington city enterprise. It was then that he started a number of improvements, mainly houses.[2]

The erection of buildings by Greenleaf was in compliance

[1] The One Hundredth Anniversary of Washington Parish. O. B. Hallam. [Washington, 1895.] Among the members of the first vestry were William Deakins, Jr., George Walker, John Templeman, Thomas Johnson, Jr., and Gustavus Scott. Rev. George Ralph was the first rector.

[2] The principal works of this sort were as follows: four houses on the west side of 4½ Street between N and O streets, S. W., known in later years as Wheat Row; two on the south side of N between 4½ and 6th streets, S. W.; one at the southeast corner of 6th and N streets, S. W., while on the 6th Street front of the same square, four houses were erected. A wharf was also built by Greenleaf at the foot of 6th Street, S. W., the first in the locality, which became the principal water front of the city. It was Greenleaf who began the erection of the Six Buildings at the northeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 22d Street, but before completion, this property was sold to Isaac Polock, by whom the houses were completed. The Seven Buildings, another row of residences, were begun about this time at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 18th Street, by General Walter Stewart, and were finished by Morris and Nicholson. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 139.

with the terms of the agreement, but to these operators this was the least important phase of the enterprise. What was looked upon as of more consequence was raising money based on the Washington lots and finding a rapid market for the lots. Without apparently any help from the Washington property, the first instalment of the purchase money, amounting to $68,571, was paid promptly and deeds in fee simple for 857 lots were granted by the commissioners, in accordance with the original terms of a money payment for the property as a consideration for the transfer of the title. Then a change was made in this prudent policy and personal security was substituted for cash or security based on the real estate. This important step was not taken hastily, but only after careful deliberation as well as correspondence with Washington.[1]

The motive was an urgent one, as the supply of money to carry on the affairs of the city depended on the success of a loan which Greenleaf was endeavoring to negotiate in Holland, both on his own account as well as for the city. When it was pointed out that a loan could not be placed abroad unless deeds in fee for the property could be offered for security, and also that the selling operations of the syndicate would be facilitated by being able to furnish to purchasers deeds in fee, and further that the public would be secured by a bond signed by Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf, all hesitation disappeared.[2]

Once the bars were down, blocks of the city property were placed in jeopardy, for the transaction, large in its totality, retained that characteristic as to its details.

It was proposed by Greenleaf to borrow the great sum, for those days, of $1,200,000, the proceeds to be shared by the commissioners and the members of the syndicate. So deeds in fee were given to Greenleaf for two thousand lots, one half of the

[1] A collection of letters, January to December, 1794, relating to financial transactions with Greenleaf, is to be found among the State Department, D.C., Papers.

[2] Modified agreement with Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf, substituting their personal security for real estate. Commissioners Proceedings, April 24, 1794. Printed in American State Papers, Vol. 1. Miscellaneous, p. 224.

land to be credited to the syndicate purchase, the other half to the portion remaining to the public. But as affording a forecast of the disaster that eventually came, the efforts to float a loan of that size in Holland resulted only in securing about one tenth, or $120,000, all of which was absorbed by the necessities of the operators. The city got no money, but the certificates of the lots given for the city's share of the loan were returned. The certificates for the other thousand lots were used to secure what was borrowed, and also some passed by sale of the syndicate to individuals.

It was Greenleaf's purpose to go to Europe to negotiate the loan and also to enter upon his duties as United States consul at Amsterdam, to which position he had been appointed in the preceding spring. But he did not leave the country, as apparently the events involving his personal fortunes were moving towards their destined end with such rapidity that it was impossible. The position he was appointed to fill remained vacant for over a year, but in the fall of 1794, when it was quite evident that Greenleaf was no longer available, Sylvanus Bourne was appointed vice consul. It was through Mr. Bourne that the later negotiations for a loan were conducted. The conditions in Europe were unfavorable to operations of that sort and the prospects of the city were clouded, as was the case in subsequent years, due to the disturbances of and following the French revolution.

That nothing was left undone on the part of Greenleaf to facilitate the negotiation of a loan is quite evident from the records, but his anxiety led him to a course which, if not unscrupulous in intent, was certainly careless of the terms of a contract. In the fall of 1794 the commissioners called Greenleaf's attention to the circumstance that his deed of city lots to Dutch capitalists was without the condition of improvement of every third lot sold before June 1, 1796, and also that he had exceeded his authority in making the city and the syndicate jointly responsible for the proposed loan. As illustrating an ingenious method of expanding credit may be cited the suggestion made to the commissioners by Greenleaf and accepted by

them to anticipate the payment of the second instalment of the purchase money of the syndicate due the following May by accepting notes of Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf. By this device the syndicate secured 857 additional lots in fee simple, while the commissioners placed the notes in the Bank of Columbia. "But under protest as they think cash should be given." [1]

Greenleaf's fertility of resource in this particular is further illustrated by another suggestion to the city authorities that money be raised on the prospect of the third and last instalment of the grant from the state of Virginia, due in January, 1795, being paid at that time. The commissioners thought well of the proposal, but could find no one to advance the money.

It is quite evident there was no distrust at this period of the credit of the three men, which at the outset was classed gilt-edged, or any suspicion of their financial soundness. But the year 1794 was one of rapid changes in their prospects, for as the condition of the money markets tightened, its grip was felt first and more severely by those who were in debt. As these bold and extensive operators sank deeper in the mass of their obligations, their attempts to extricate themselves resembled the frantic efforts of men in deadly peril. An illustration of this phase is found in their drawing on their agent in Europe for the proceeds of a loan which had been merely undertaken by Dutch bankers but had not then been offered for public subscription.

The direction of the first improvements in the city was determined by the ideas Greenleaf had of the future development. It was not an original idea with him that the city would centre about the water front, but rather a conception born of a period when water transportation was the important medium of commerce. Jefferson had the same notion, and it was the land in the vicinity of the Eastern Branch and the Potomac that was first laid out in building lots. Greenleaf stipulated in his selection of public lots that 4500 should be taken from the southwest of Massachusetts Avenue and 1500 from the northeast of that thoroughfare. He was excluded from selecting water lots or

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, Oct. 18, 1794.

lots having a water front, and such lots were from the outset put in a separate class and sold by the front foot instead of by the square foot, as was done elsewhere in the city. It is also to be noted that his largest purchases from individuals were from Daniel Carroll and Notley Young, both of whom had extensive holdings on and near the water.

The expected change in the personnel of the board of commissioners was completed by the middle of September, 1794, after more than a year since the president had been notified by Messrs. Johnson and Stuart of their wish to be relieved of their duties.[1]

The delay was due apparently to the difficulty the president experienced in finding suitable men. As early as January, in a letter to Mr. Johnson expressing his regret that his decision to leave the board remained unchanged, he added, "I would thank you for naming (which may be in confidence) such persons as you shall think best qualified to succeed you in this interesting and important business. My limited acquaintance with convenient characters does not enable me to do it to my satisfaction, and even among those which might happen to present themselves to my view, there might be local circumstances in the way unknown to me, which might render them ineligible in the opinion of the public, for the impartial execution of the trust imposed. Were it not for this, I presume proper characters might be had in Georgetown or among the proprietors of the city, but how far their connections with or jarring interests therein, may be a let to such appointments is worthy of that consideration which you can so well appreciate for my information." [2]

The appointments to fill the vacancies were Gustavus Scott of Maryland and Dr. William Thornton, so that in both instances Washington avoided the anticipated complications in the selection of men who were too closely identified with District affairs. However, in the case of Mr. Scott the president con-

[1] Gustavus Scott's commission was dated Aug. 23, 1794, and that of Dr. William Thornton, Sept. 12, 1794.

[2] Washington to Thomas Johnson. Philadelphia, Jan. 23, 1794. Writings of Washington. Ford.

tinued the policy of selecting those familiar with the locality that guided him in the appointment of the first board, for Mr. Scott was a native of Prince William County, Va., which adjoined on the west and south Fairfax County, of which Alexandria was the county seat.

His father, who was an Episcopal minister, had come from Scotland and settled in that part of Virginia in 1730. Mr. Scott's birthplace, where he continued to have property interests, was much nearer the new city than the home of Thomas Johnson. He was educated at Aberdeen, Scotland, and began his career as a lawyer in Virginia, subsequently removing to Maryland, where he became actively identified with the American cause when the troubles with the mother country arose. He served on the public committees of the revolutionary period and was a member of the convention that framed the constitution of Maryland in 1776. He served in the assembly of that state, and also was sent as a delegate to the continental congress in 1784. He was one of the organizers of the Potomac Canal Company, of which Washington was president. At the time of his appointment he was living in Baltimore.

The appointment of Dr. Thornton was the beginning of a service for the new city of a man who, perhaps, with the exception of Mr. Jefferson, was the most versatile of all who were identified with this period in the history of the nation's capital.[1]

By these appointments the high character of the men intrusted with the direction of city affairs was fully maintained. A new régime was begun. Closer personal attention was given to the business that came before the board, as well as greater order and regularity in the methods. The gradual ex-

[1] In a manuscript fragment of what was apparently a biographical sketch of her husband, Mrs. Thornton writes, "philosophy, politics, finance, astronomy, medicine, botany, painting, poetry, religion, agriculture,—in short, all subjects by turns occupied his active and indefatigable mind." In another paper, Mrs. Thornton expresses the opinion that his eager curiosity for all kinds of knowledge prevented the concentration that would have led to prominence in any one department. J. Henley Smith collection.

pansion of the scope of city affairs no doubt had much to do with this change.

The growth of the business is brought out by contrasting the expenditures made from the beginning to the fall of 1793, as shown in the report of the auditors to the president, with those given in the report of the finances of the city to Oct. 1, 1794, by the commissioners to the president Jan. 29, 1795. During the latter period of a year nearly as much had been spent as during the entire previous period of more than two years. As the commissioners observe in their comments attached to this report, "The balances due from lots sold are not included in above, as they will probably be absorbed by what is due to the original proprietors." Their conclusion is that the remaining funds of the city at the present prices of property must fall very short of accomplishing the objects in view. They therefore suggest a loan as the best means of avoiding the necessity of placing the property on the market under disadvantageous circumstances.

No doubt an important qualification that Dr. Thornton possessed for the office, in the mind of the president, was the fact of his residence in the new district, where he had been established some six months or more. The president had been urging the importance of constant personal attention on the part of the members of the board to the business of the city, and he had on several occasions expressed the opinion that the commissioners ought to live in the city, and in fact practically made it a condition of Mr. Scott's appointment.[1]

[1] There is no suggestion at this time of possible complications arising from Dr. Thornton being both the designer of the plan of the capitol and also as a member of the board, with authority to determine and direct the execution of that plan. In fact, no trouble due to this source arose, as the same disputes and conflicts between the various architects in charge of that structure and the board relative to difference of opinion about various features of the plan would have occurred under other circumstances. The letters and papers on this subject in the Thornton Papers, J. Henley Smith collection, show very clearly that at one time the detailed drawings for the capitol were furnished by Dr. Thornton and then at others by the architect placed in charge of the work as superintendent.

Dr. Thornton owned and occupied a house in Georgetown in the desirable residence section, on the high bluff overlooking the Potomac on M Street west of 32d Street. Mr. Carroll, who remained on the board for another year, continued his home at Forest Glen. But Mr. Scott, who at first lived on his farm, Strawberry Vale, in Virginia, about nine miles from Georgetown,[1] purchased in 1795, a few months after his appointment, the place owned and occupied by Anthony Holmead, and known as Rock Hill. This property lay just west of the bounds of the city, between Florida Avenue and Rock Creek. When in later years it passed into the possession of Joel Barlow, the name was changed to Kalorama.

Almost at the outset, the new board decided to sit during the winter months two days in each week, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M., and the balance of the year three days each week. Rules for the conduct of the meetings were adopted for the first time. It was also decided to keep the accounts in dollars and cents instead of in Maryland pounds and shillings.[2]

The most definite suggestion that has been preserved of the location of the commissioner's office in the city is an indirect allusion to it in a letter written by the commissioners to William Rhodes, Dec. 10, 1801, in which they speak of a stable he was erecting "near this office"; and also it is added "near the record office of Washington County." This latter office was "in the house immediately opposite Mr. Rhodes's Hotel," and the latter at that time was at the northeast corner of 15th and F streets, N. W.[3]

Progress had been made in the survey of the city, although not without considerable friction in the surveying force and with the commissioners. As the result of the latter Isaac Briggs was dismissed Nov. 2, 1793, and Benjamin and Joseph Ellicott Jan. 28, 1794, James R. Dermott, Alexander Ral-

[1] Notice of Elias B. Caldwell, administrator of the estate of Gustavus Scott, advertising for sale a farm called Strawberry Vale about nine miles from Georgetown. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 7, 1801.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Feb. 18, 1795. The Maryland pound was equal to $2.66 in United States currency.

[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, March 27, 1801.

ston, George Fenwick and Thomas Freeman continuing the work. The latter in a letter to the commissioners, dated Jan. 1, 1795, states that previous to his appointment, which was on March 25, 1794, the portion of the city surveyed lay south of K, G and C streets, N., from Rock Creek to the Eastern Branch. The survey at the date of his letter, he adds, is extended from the river on the west side of the capitol to P Street, N., and on the east side of the capitol to C Street, N., "All that portion to the north of these lines remains to be surveyed, which is one fifth of the whole."

During the summer of 1794 the persistence of Hallet in carrying out his own plans, rather than those of Thornton, brought to a crisis his relations with the capitol building, and he was discharged Nov. 15, 1794.[1]

Nearly a year elapsed before another appointment of an architect to superintend the building of the capitol was made, and in that interval the work went on under the direction of Mr. Hoban, the drawings being supplied by Dr. Thornton, who was then serving his first year as a member of the board of commissioners.[2]

In the fall of 1794, as soon as he heard of Hallet's discharge,

[1] Commissioners to Hallet, June 26, 1794. Commissioners' Letter Book. In this letter the commissioners clearly state that no alterations were to be permitted in the accepted plan without the consent of the president and the commissioners and that Hallet was employed in that work under Mr. Hoban, who had been made superintendent of that building as well as of the president's house.

[2] In a letter dated April 17, 1799, from Messrs. Scott and White, the associates of Dr. Thornton on the board of commissioners, he is informed that the original advertisement for plans requires that the author should furnish the necessary drawings, "and your letter of the 17th of Nov. 1795 admits the principle." He is requested to state whether he will furnish the drawings as specified in a letter from Hoban to the commissioners, dated April 16, 1799, namely, for the east entrance and stairway, the elliptic staircase, the back staircase, the representatives' chamber and the senate chamber. In his reply of the same date, Dr. Thornton informs his colleagues that he is willing to furnish the drawings. "It was made a part," he added, "of the duties of the late superintendent [George Hadfield] to furnish detailed drawings subject to the approval of the board and I presume the board still considered that a part of his duties." J. Henley Smith Papers.

John Trumbull, the minister to England, wrote to the commissioners, recommending George Hadfield, an architect in England for the place. This appointment was made in the fall of the following year.

The straitened state of the finances of the city led to the abandonment in the year 1795 of the undertaking to connect by a canal the Tiber and St. James creeks. Some 27,000 cubic yards of earth had been removed, at a cost of $5170, and then the trench was left unfinished. Some years later the work was completed, and the Washington City Canal came into existence, but it was due to private enterprise. The intention of the commissioners to erect a bridge over the Tiber at 4½ Street was not carried out. It is probable that 7th Street was looked upon as better suited. At any rate one was placed there, as well as such a structure over James Creek on the line of N Street, S. W.

But the eastern section of the city was placed in more direct contact with its Maryland neighbors by establishing a ferry, at the foot of South Capitol Street, that was known as the lower ferry.[1]

A public work that as planned was to make no drain upon the public funds was the rebuilding of the bridge over Rock Creek on the line of K Street. The structure there was found to be insecure, owing to "unskilful construction," as the commissioners characterized it, and early in the year 1795 an agreement was made with the owners of the land adjoining the bridge and the causeway to take down the centre arch and erect a drawbridge. The cost was to be met from the proceeds of the sale of the lots along the causeway deeded to the commissioners at the outset of this enterprise in consideration of the improvement to be made, but which now the commissioners deeded back to certain of the landowners who undertook to supply a bridge in the place of the ruined structure.[2]

These men were no more successful in turning these causeway lots into money than were the commissioners, and in consequence

[1] *Columbian Chronicle*, May 12, 1795.
[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Jan. 9, 1795.

the K Street bridge was left for the time in ruins and a wooden bridge was built by the commissioners with a draw on the line of M Street, occupying nearly the site of the first bridge erected some six years previously by the Georgetown people. The loss to the city by the failure of the Harbaugh bridge was secured as far as was possible by getting from that luckless experimenter, for it appears the bridge was after a plan of his own invention, a mortgage on his property in the city.

An attempt was made at this period to revive interest in the project of erecting a bridge over the Potomac, presumably where one was subsequently built near the Little Falls. A charter had been procured from the Maryland legislature (acts of Dec. 29 and 30, 1791) for the Georgetown Bridge Company, but beyond inviting subscriptions nothing had been done. Now four years later three of the five incorporators, William Deakins, Jr., James M. Lingan and Uriah Forrest not joining, gave notice that books for receiving subscriptions would be opened July 1st, 1795, for 400 shares at $200 per share. It was further stated that Timothy Palmer, "an artist eminently distinguished, has undertaken the erection of the bridge." In less than two years the work was completed.[1] It was necessary to do more than build a bridge, as there were no roads leading to the chosen site, and therefore it may be concluded an entirely new traffic centre was created. The Maryland legislature gave three of the directors[2] authority to condemn land for a road from the bridge to Georgetown. As it followed the river, entering Georgetown at the foot of M Street, it became known as the river road and later as the town road. A road was also opened up through Alexandria County.

At this time too the commissioners did away with the practice of erecting the public buildings by day work under their immediate supervision and instead adopted the contract system.

The year 1794 had nearly closed and the Greenleaf-Morris syndicate had been interested in Washington property for more

[1] *Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette*, March 12, 1795.

[2] Maryland Law, Dec. 24, 1795. John Templeman, James M. Lingan and Thomas Clark.

than a year before they began to dispose of their holdings. The first buyer to appear was General Walter Stewart of Philadelphia, a revolutionary soldier and a friend of Robert Morris, and associated with Samuel Blodgett in the Philadelphia insurance company. He did not confine his purchases to the property of the syndicate. In November, 1794, he wrote to the commissioners relative to several squares which he contemplated buying. One of these was the square bounded by 14th, 15th and H streets and New York Avenue. This particular ground, the commissioners informed him, they considered the most valuable in the city.[1]

General Stewart acquired from Greenleaf ground at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 19th Street, N. W., where the Seven Buildings were erected. But his operations in this city came to an end by his death in the year 1796.

In the meanwhile Greenleaf, whose home and business were in New York City, made the acquaintance of Thomas Law, who arrived in this country from England in the summer of that year from a distinguished career in the Indian service. He was well connected, his father having been a bishop in the English Church and one of his brothers having attained the same position. Another brother was Lord Ellenborough, who was the leading counsel for Warren Hastings. Thomas Law himself had spent more than half of his thirty-seven years in India, where he had been successful as an administrator in the Indian service and had also written several books on topics connected with Indian affairs. He had a fortune of about $250,000, and with that money and his three sons he came to America, leaving England because of disapproval of the course of the government in his own case and also of the war with France.[2]

[1] In the statement of lots sold by the commissioners appended to the report of a select committee, Feb. 23, 1825, 18th Cong., 2d Sess., No. 90, the sale of the above-mentioned square to General Stewart, together with the square bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, H, 19th and 20th streets, and the square bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, I, 21st and 22d streets is recorded. The price paid for each lot in the three squares in February, 1795, was $636.54.

[2] Many details of Thomas Law's life are found in a publication en-

William Mayne Duncanson of England was with Mr. Law on his voyage to this country and also took up his residence in New York. In December, Mr. Law bought from Mr. Greenleaf lots in the city of Washington, or rather secured an option of purchase, agreeing to pay about $133,000. He came to Washington, Feb. 23, 1795, to inspect the property, and was so much impressed that he took up the option and made the transaction a purchase.[1]

At the same time Mr. Duncanson, who had come on from New York with Mr. Law, and who dined in company with Mr. Law and Mr. Cranch with Notley Young at the latter's residence on G Street, S. W., determined to invest some of his fortune in real estate in the new city. His purchases and loans there eventually amounted to between $60,000 and $70,000.

Pending the completion of the selection of the lots and the vesting in him of the fee simple title, Mr. Law paid over the purchase money, but was wise enough or fortunate enough to get from the syndicate a mortgage on such of their property as had been conveyed in fee simple to it, so that when the crisis came in its affairs, Mr. Law was the only one of the purchasers under them that was saved from the fate of being placed in the hopeless situation of a general unsecured creditor.

This transaction with Mr. Law was second only in magnitude

titled A Reply to Certain Insinuations published as an Article in the Fifty-eighth Number of the *Quarterly Review*. Thomas Law. Washington, 1824. Also Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City.

[1] Mr. Law's recollection of the city as he first saw it was recorded some years later in a species of autobiography, still unpublished, the manuscript of which is in possession of Mrs. Kirby Flower Smith of Baltimore, a great grandchild of Mr. Law. Extracts from these notes are in Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 255. Mr. Law writes: "Being now the oldest inhabitant, it may be useful to give a brief history of the city since my arrival here. I put up in Georgetown because there was only one little tavern in the city, which then contained only three or four houses belonging to the owners of estates."

In June, 1794, the commissioners record that private building is beginning in the city, but if Mr. Law's recollection of what he saw the following spring can be relied on, these operations must have been rather limited.

to that of Morris and Greenleaf with the commissioners. But the feature of the Law purchase that appeared to make the deepest contemporary impression was that he paid $266 each for 500 lots which had been bought a little over a year previously for $80 per lot. However, such profits did not have the usual effect in creating a buying mania, and hence may be gathered some notion of the current financial state which then and for some years later contributed in no small degree to clog the operations of the city. At the very time that Mr. Law closed his great transaction in city property, the efforts to place a loan either at home or abroad had utterly failed.

Washington's view of the transaction made by Morris and Greenleaf with Mr. Law was expressed in a personal letter to Daniel Carroll, the commissioner, a few weeks after it had been completed. "You will recollect, no doubt," he writes, "that I yielded my assent to Mr. Greenleaf's first proposition to purchase a number of lots in the Federal City (although I thought the price he offered for them was too low) because at that time the business seemed to be in a stagnant state and something was necessary to put the wheels in motion again. To the second sale which was made to him, my repugnance was greater, inasmuch as the necessity for making it was not so apparent to my view — and because another thing had become quite evident, viz., that he was speculating deeply, was aiming to monopolize deeply, and was thereby laying the foundation of immense profit to himself and those with whom he was concerned." [1]

Mr. Law, with an ardor that was evidently characteristic, went into the Washington business in no half-hearted way. He was a man of convictions, and with a special regard for these creatures of his mind; an egotist, also inclined to be dictatorial, his traits led him to be regarded as eccentric. In spite, however, of such shortcomings he was an efficient factor in the upbuilding of the city, where he spent over sixty years, and especially in the early period he contributed materially to its progress.

Mr. Law's selection of lots in his purchase was confined to

[1] Quoted in Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 92.

the section of the city south of the capitol to the Eastern Branch, following in this respect the judgment of the members of the syndicate. From being an owner of property in that section, he rapidly passed to the relation of being its advocate, and held that the true future of the city lay in the development of the commercial opportunities afforded by the Eastern Branch and the Potomac. He had been in the city but a little more than four months when he announced his purpose to establish an agency house for East India trade in connection with James Barry, an Irishman whom Mr. Law had met in New York. At that time, he declared that the commissioners "should have been obliged to settle near the Capitol, whereas unfortunately they have made purchases near Georgetown. . . . The city can only be made by the Eastern Branch." [1]

The Barry wharf at the foot of New Jersey Avenue was well under way by the fall of 1795, and there it was hoped an extensive foreign trade would be centred. At the opening of the year 1795 Lewis Deblois had a wharf at the foot of South Capitol Street, while later on he built for Mr. Nicholson a wharf between 11th and 12th streets, S. E. The commissioners also had a wharf in the vicinity of the foot of New Jersey Avenue. Then there was the Greenleaf wharf at the foot of 6th Street southwest, while just to the north and near the foot of 7th Street was a wharf built by Notley Young under a license issued by the commissioners in March, 1795. The two last mentioned are the only ones shown on the Washington or Tin Case map completed in the year 1797. There is nothing to indicate the commissioners' wharf between 21st and 22d streets or that of Lear and Company which had by that time been erected at the foot of G Street.

The development of what has since come to be the principal commercial water front of the city, namely, the stretch from the railway bridge to the government reservation of the War

[1] Law to Greenleaf, July 4, 1795. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 107.

Mr. Law may be regarded as the father of the later phase of the jealousy between these two sections that was first given expression when the site of the city was being chosen.

College, or from 14th to 6th streets, was in part at least retarded by difficulties of a physical nature. Along this entire stretch extended a bluff varying from fifteen to twenty-five feet in height above the river. The only way of reaching the wharves was by a steep descent. Up to the breaking out of the civil war, 6th and 11th streets were the only thoroughfares open to the river. Water Street was covered with water.[1]

At this time an important question was raised as to the treatment of the water front, and more especially whether the street bounding the edge of the water, as shown on the engraved plan, should be actually laid out. In the event a water street was decided upon, the use of the wharves would be restricted and the wharf owners put to additional expense by a requirement restricting buildings at the wharf to the land side of such a street. The authority to regulate the building of wharves had been given the commissioners by the Maryland act of 1791, and they proceeded to frame a regulation which was completed July 20, 1795.[2] They were fully aware of the possibility of checking the development of the business of the city by insisting upon requirements that would add to the expense of merchants. The application of Mr. Barry to build a wharf with warehouses on it was what brought the question to an issue, and, as Mr. Law was interested with Mr. Barry, he was soon in his impetuous way conducting the first of his acrimonious attacks on the city officials. He wrote to Mr. Morris on this subject and also took the opportunity of charging the commissioners with partiality for the Georgetown end of the city and of slowness in attending to the public business. Mr. Morris endeavored to pacify the irate East Indian and counselled moderation, which was in accordance with his usual policy of conducting business, and at this juncture in his affairs a contrary course, he recognized, would be injurious. He told Mr. Law very plainly that he said nothing to the president about his charges against the

[1] Potomac Flats Case, Vol. 1, pp. 139, 143, 201, 273, 1427 and 2066.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, also a letter to the president, July 24, 1795, explaining the reason for this action and its scope. Commissioners' Letter Book.

commissioners for the reason that they were general and not specific.[1]

As to the wharf regulations, Mr. Morris states he told the president it would be in vain to attempt to prohibit the building of warehouses on wharves, as the same thing was attempted when the city of Philadelphia was first laid out, but the plan could not be carried out "as interest got the better of all other considerations." [2]

The regulation itself was open to the same criticism as the charges against the commissioners, as it was so general that the commissioners themselves were uncertain whether the proprietors of wharves were obliged to fill up and make a street sixty feet wide between the last building on their wharves and the channel or only to leave a space of sixty feet to be thereafter made and at the expense of the public.[3]

The commissioners, in their regulation of July 20, 1795, repeated the provision of the current Maryland law that no wharf should be built that would interfere with the navigation of the river, and then provided for the local situation by stipulating that a space should be left on the water front where the general plan of the city required it, and where no street or streets intersect a wharf site to leave a space of sixty feet for a street at the termination of every three hundred feet of made ground.

The commissioners, viewing the matter from a practical standpoint, were doubtful if the expense of building wharves would be undertaken unless warehouses could be erected upon them. They proposed, however, that a street be left between the last building on the wharf and the end of the wharf. They

[1] A few days earlier James Greenleaf had formally presented similar charges to the secretary of state, Edmund Randolph, which were referred to the commissioners, and a complete denial and explanation were made by these officials. The entire correspondence is given in Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 116 and pp. 153–156.

[2] Morris to Law, July 18, 1795. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 116.

[3] Commissioners to Alexander White, Aug. 12, 1795. Commissioners' Letter Book. The official action and correspondence of the commissioners at this time relative to wharves are given in full in the Potomac Flats Case, Vol. VI, pp. 180–189.

were, however, of the opinion such restriction would probably retard for some time the improvement of the water property of the city, especially as it was "situated between two growing commercial towns already possessed of considerable trade and population and where proprietors are left to build as fancy or interest may dictate." The commissioners add "that instances have occurred of the restive spirit excited by the restriction to build of brick or stone." [1]

"You will observe," write the commissioners to Alexander White, Aug. 12, 1795, who was then in Philadelphia, in regard to the regulation as to wharves received from the president with his approval, "that when the President comes to sum up the leading regulations necessary to be published that he totally omits a street between the termination of the wharves and channel." Thus the president did what the commissioners hesitated to recommend.

With this general attempt at regulation, leaving undetermined the important question of a street between the city squares and the wharf property and the right of such abutting property to wharfage privileges, the entire subject of the water front was dropped and it was not taken up again except at intervals during years, and even then no final decision was reached. So it remained a vexed, uncertain question, until the decision in the Potomac Flats Case in 1903 affirmed existence of a street along the water front in the plan of the city and the ownership of the United States of the entire Potomac water front from the end of Greenleaf Point to the southwest angle of the square south of Square 12 near C Street, N. W.[2]

[1] Commissioners to the President, July 24, 1795. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] United States *vs.* Morris, 23 W. L. R., 745. As early as 1797, Nicholas King, the city surveyor, in a letter to the commissioners, observed "the plan of the city where it abounds on the river does not seem to have been at all attended to, but wherever the squares came to its present banks, they stopped, or their course and extent were left to chance."

# CHAPTER X

## WASHINGTON'S PLAN TO FOUND A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

THE sentiment in favor of the establishment in this country of a national university was given its first definite form and direction by the action of Washington. He not only declared himself in favor of its location in the federal city, but gave what he considered a substantial gift in fifty shares of the Potomac Company.[1] The letter to the commissioners announcing his intentions was dated Jan. 28, 1795, and the latter under date of Feb. 18, 1795, informed him that subject to his approval they had chosen a piece of ground as a site for a national university. His approval was given the following year.[2]

As described by Washington in his letter to the commissioners, the site that met with his preference was the one bounded by 23d and 25th and E streets, N. W., the Potomac at that day forming the southern boundary. At the present day, owing in part to the reclamation of the land on the river in that locality, the southern line of the property is a short distance north of B Street if prolonged through Potomac Park.[3] The president in the course of the letter to the city au-

[1] "I have not the smallest doubt that this donation (when the navigation is in complete operation, which it will be in less than two years) will amount to 1200 or 1500 pounds sterling a year and become a rapidly increasing fund." Washington to Alexander Hamilton. Works of Hamilton, Vol. VI, p. 147. The par value of each share was $444.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Oct. 21, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book. Also State Department, D.C., Papers.

[3] As the public appropriations when made were distinguished only by numerals, it is difficult to determine the identity by the names which were bestowed on them (mainly through unofficial sources), indicating in most cases a possible future use. In the case of the university site, however, besides Washington's description, the commissioners in a memorial to congress of Dec. 12, 1796, gave the area

thorities, after expressing his preference for a site for the proposed university, added that if there is room, part of the ground might be used for a botanical garden, which is the earliest reference to such a provision in the new city. But if the site proposed, he continues, is inadequate, the square on L'Enfant's plan designed for a marine hospital might be appropriated. "If neither will admit of it, I see no solid objection against commencing the work within the president's square, but not to be occupied for this purpose beyond a certain period," when, he adds, provision may be made to improve it into pleasure walks, etc.

Eight years before Washington took this decisive step, it was proposed by Madison in the convention that adopted the constitution to include among the enumerated powers of congress the power "to establish and provide for a national university at the seat of government," but it was pointed out that such a provision would be a superfluity, as it was comprehended within the scope of the "exclusive legislation" vested in congress over the federal district. The amendment was therefore not adopted. There was more or less discussion of the subject in the newspapers of the day, and Washington touched upon it in his address at the second session of the first congress. During the fall of 1794, Jefferson broached a plan for transplanting the faculty of the university at Geneva to this country and corresponded with Washington in regard to it, and then Washington in more positive terms expressed himself as favoring a national institution located at the seat of national government.[1]

of the site approved by the president for the university as nineteen acres, one rood and twenty-one perches. The only other reservation of that size is Judiciary Square, but the identity of that public space is clearly established. For years the university site was occupied by the Naval Observatory Building, and of late years the old structure with new buildings has been used by the Naval Medical School Hospital.

[1] Washington in writing to John Adams in regard to the Geneva scheme, Nov. 27, 1794, states, "That a national university in this country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion, and the appropriation of grounds and funds for it in the federal city has long been contemplated and talked of."

Finally, when a site was selected in the federal city, there were two men identified with the new city, who threw themselves with vigor into the work of advancing the project. One of these was Samuel Blodgett, an early advocate, if not the earliest, to come out in favor of such an institution, and Dr. William Thornton, to whom, as might naturally be expected, such an undertaking made a special appeal. In this particular, as well as others, Dr. Thornton and Mr. Blodgett found a common ground of sympathy, and it is not surprising that their association continued under terms of great intimacy for a number of years. The two men had many similar tastes and views and both possessed a lively interest and curiosity in regard to all matters of human knowledge.[1]

At the time the site for the university was chosen, according to the recollection of Mr. Law, it was the intention "to have the Navy Yard" on Rock Creek, and "the Marine Barracks were laid out on its banks and the Marine Corps encamped there." [2] It also appears that at one time the university site was intended to be used as a military post, although such a use of Greenleaf's Point was early contemplated.[3]

The university movement was given a further impetus by a memorial from the commissioners to congress, dated Nov. 21, 1796, in which was set forth the president's action, both as to the selection of a site and his donation of Potomac Company stock and suggesting that a law be enacted authorizing the proper persons to receive donations of money and land for the proposed establishment. The memorial was referred to a committee and was reported favorably to the house by Mr.

[1] A useful summary of the efforts made for nearly a century by the advocates of a national university in Washington is to be found in The National University, John W. Hoyt, Washington, 1892.

[2] From the Law Manuscript, Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 255. As will be noted later on in the narrative, a detachment of marines was temporarily quartered in Georgetown and also on Camp Hill, or Peter Hill, both early names of the University Square.

[3] "The space heretofore proposed to be appropriated for a fort and barracks on Peter's Hill is the most proper site" [for the national university]. Commissioners to Washington, Oct. 1, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book.

Madison, and came up for discussion, but no final action was reached.[1]

The extent to which the designation of the uses of reservations was carried finds an illustration in a statement made to the commissioners Oct. 15, 1794, by Thomas Freeman, employed in the survey of the city. He had been asked to give the list of appropriations that fell within the land of Mr. Burnes, and he enumerates them as follows: "part of the President's Square, the Judiciary, National Church, Bank, Exchange, and Market Squares." According to a letter written to the commissioners Aug. 27, 1799, by Daniel Carroll of Duddington, a reservation to be used as an exchange was also contemplated near the Eastern Branch. The exact location as pointed out by Mr. Carroll was the squares between 5th and 7th streets, and south of M Street, S. E. Such a provision was not made, and in the division with the landowners, the squares passed into private hands. Subsequently they were acquired by the United States and added to the navy yard.

A specific appropriation was made by the commissioners of another public reservation in selecting the square on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 3d and 4½th streets, as the site of the mint. This square, as well as the two to the east and bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, 2d, 3d, and C streets, N. W., were spoken of by the commissioners as "the Bank and Exchange Squares."[2] But six years later

[1] American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 153. Memorial of the Commissioners.

[2] Commissioners to Edmund Randolph, secretary of state. Commissioners' Letter Book, May 26, 1795. As the area of the proposed mint site is given as six acres, that clearly identifies the western square of the three as the one selected. The abundant water supply, referring to the near-by Tiber, was mentioned as one of the advantages. On June 13, 1795, Dermott was directed to prepare a plat of the city with every public appropriation plainly delineated, "together with the appropriation now made by the board for the national university and mint." Proceedings of Commissioners. As indicating probably the origin of the public appropriations, there is an entry June 19, 1795, in the proceedings of a letter written to the secretary of state enclosing "a plat and Major L'Enfant's publication respecting the public appropriations in the city."

Congress decided to continue the mint temporarily at Philadelphia, and as it has proved, the location became permanent.

The survey of the city was completed June 25, 1795, and a street 80 feet wide was laid out bounding the city from Rock Creek east to the Eastern Branch and known for many years as Boundary Street and now named Florida Avenue. All the squares had boundary stones, and the surveyor called the attention of the commissioners to the importance of securing their preservation.[1]

The third change in the board of commissioners was made necessary by the resignation of Daniel Carroll in May, 1795. He had served for a little over four years, and was the last of the members of the first board to leave the service. He was sixty-five years of age, but evidently in feeble health. Mr. Law speaks of him as "enfeebled with age," though "the most zealous and active of the three." [2]

The successor of Mr. Carroll was Alexander White, who was born in Rappahannock County, Va., fifty-seven years before. He died in Woodville, that county a short distance to the west of Culpepper, where it is presumed he was living at the date of the appointment. Mr. White served his state in the continental congress and was chosen a representative to the first congress and was reëlected. It was Mr. White whom Mr. Jefferson described as voting for the funding bill "with a revul-

[1] Thomas Freeman to the Commissioners. Letter Book. Printed in Potomac Flats Case, Vol. 4, p. 1599. Mr. Freeman states he fixed at Rock Creek in the road leading from Georgetown to Bladensburg, where a small temporary boundary stone stood, a large stone lettered "First boundary of the city of Washington," "and from thence ran a street eighty feet wide, which bounds the city to the second boundary; the north side thereof runs in the centre of the road." He produced this street to the third boundary, where it falls into 15th Street E., and "with part of 15th and C Street N. completes a street which bounds the city from Rock Creek to the Eastern Branch; the north side of the bound stones stand in the north line of the street — so that these stones stand in the city."

[2] Law to Greenleaf, July 4, 1795. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 108. He died in May of the following year, the death of his mother at the age of ninety-three having preceded his by only a few months.

sion of stomach," and his was one of the two votes that carried the measure and made possible the enactment of the residence bill.

Prior to this change, however, the commissioners experienced the sharpness of tongue and the acerbity of temper of their late colleague, Thomas Johnson. For in pursuance of his declared intention when he gave up his official connection with the city, to devote his time to furthering his private interests, he had purchased, from Greenleaf and Morris, Square west of Square 4 on Rock Creek, just north of K Street. The commissioners took the position that these were water lots, and therefore did not come within the selections to be made by Greenleaf and his associates. Mr. Johnson, however, held that this restriction did not apply to the section on Rock Creek north of K Street, but only to lots on the river.

The commissioners further maintained that a water street was to be provided there. The controversy was referred to the president, but before any response had come from that source, it had gone to such extremes that the commissioners speak of "the disgraceful epithets" which they attribute to "a derangement of the mind" of their late associate. They refused all further communications until " a return of reason points out the propriety of using at least the language of gentlemen." By June Mr. Johnson had brought a suit in chancery against the commissioners, and the latter retained Luther Martin and William Pinckney as their counsel.

But a more serious matter engaged the attention of the official heads of the city. The second instalment, due in May, 1795, of the purchase money from Greenleaf and Morris had not been paid. It is evident the joint note of the syndicate given to the commissioners the previous fall, in anticipated payment of the instalment of the purchase money due the following spring, had not been paid. Then it appears Greenleaf gave his notes for about one-third of the amount due, but these were also found, as the commissioners state, "not productive."

On the 15th of May, 1795, Greenleaf was notified by the com-

missioners that unless the payment was made, they would take legal steps. From this date the harmony and the confidence that had marked the relations between the city authorities and Greenleaf, who thus far had been the only member of the syndicate personally known in the Washington city enterprise, was changed to suspicion and distrust. In the short period of eighteen months the bubble burst, and the great expectations formed had been found to be without a sure basis. Then came another turn in the wheel with the announcement of the purchase, as it was termed, by Morris and Nicholson of the interest of Greenleaf. But as the sequel showed, this was merely the adding of another story to the financial fabric of paper. The character of this transaction is graphically depicted by Robert Morris, who wrote July 27, 1795, to William Constable: —

"Mr. Greenleaf offered to buy or sell the Washington lots at a price and on terms which he named. This was manly, and I first concluded to sell, but on further consideration Mr. N. and myself concluded it was better to buy, because it was more likely that the lots would command money to pay our debts than Mr. G.'s paper."

But Greenleaf did not raise the same objection to the paper of Morris, for that was the only consideration in the transaction.[1]

The expectations of these operators of securing a loan in Holland had been disappointed, for, as Morris explained to Washington when the latter, in the fall of 1795, wrote to Morris at the instance of the commissioners representing the pressing need of the city enterprise for funds, and urging a compliance with the terms of the agreement, "Our embarrassments have arisen from another source; Mr. Greenleaf is under contract with his hand and seal to provide us with money to carry through the operations which, at his instance, we were tempted to undertake, but the French invasion of Holland put it out of his power to fulfil his engagement."[2]

[1] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 113; also letter of Morris to William Cranch, July 20, 1795, p. 112.

[2] Morris to Washington, Sept. 21, 1795. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 114.

Morris expresses the opinion that under the circumstances the commissioners would not be justified in advertising the property for sale, and he adds hopefully that "our exertions will secure them the money much sooner than by such a course."

The commissioners, acting on the advice of their counsel, Luther Martin and William Pinckney, suspended all further conveyances of lots to the syndicate, and decided to sell "as many of the lots sold to Morris and Greenleaf as may be necessary" to make good the unpaid instalment of the purchase money due in May, 1795, especially, they add, "when they reflect that 95,000 pounds have been raised and actually received from sales of city lots by them, while they profess to be unable to pay their annual instalment of only $68,500." [1]

The commissioners at once secured from Greenleaf a reconveyance of the 1000 lots belonging to the city which had been deeded to him for the purpose of securing a loan in Holland, which was to be in addition to the loan he designed to place on the property of the syndicate.[2]

In the course of a few months the commissioners concluded not to attempt to carry measures to the extreme of a sale for fear of injury to the city. "For the past two months," they write rather dejectedly to Morris, "the operations of the city have been carried on solely by a loan from the bank on our private credit. The bank can give no further aid and will certainly call for $20,000 already lent." [3]

In spite of their resolution to suspend further conveyances to the syndicate, the commissioners granted the request of Greenleaf to convey for Morris and Nicholson a lot on the south side of E Street, between 6th and 7th streets, N. W., to the vestry of Washington Parish, and an adjoining lot to the rector, Rev. George Ralph. Dr. Thornton entered his protest, on the ground that such an action was contrary to the previous decision of the board. A few days later the commissioners called upon

[1] Commissioners to Edmund Randolph, secretary of state. Commissioners' Letter Book, June 10, 1795.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, June 5, 1795.

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book, Sept. 28, 1795.

Greenleaf to substantiate charges made by him to the secretary of state "of direct fraud and partiality in the execution of our trust." They add they believe that his course is intended to be only a cover for his inability to comply with his engagements.[1] The reply of Greenleaf has not been preserved, but from references to the matter, it was evidently of an evasive character.

The finances of the city were in such a strait that early in the year it had been decided by the city authorities to endeavor through their own exertions to secure a loan on the city property, and Dr. Thornton was sent to Philadelphia on that mission. There was apparently small hope that money could be obtained in this country, and so the effort at that time was to try what could be accomplished in England. By the fall of 1795 it was known that such an expectation was not to be relied upon, and then Washington advised that an application be made to the state of Maryland, where it was presumed that the interest in the success of the new city would be a favorable factor, and in addition that the state was in a good financial condition.[2]

The good judgment of the first president was manifest in his counsel on this occasion, that in the event the proposed Maryland loan could not be made, then it would be time enough to apply to the general government. Before such an alternative was resorted to, not only were efforts made in England and in Holland, but in addition to the application to the state of Maryland the aid of the bank of the United States was sought. It was not until every other resource had failed that what was apparently a dreaded ordeal was determined upon, and congress was asked at the session early in 1796 for a loan.

Progress was being made in the erection of the capitol and the president's house. By the autumn of 1795 the first story above ground of the north wing of the capitol was about completed. In October George Hadfield was placed in charge, relieving Mr. Hoban of his duties as superintendent of that

[1] Commissioners to Greenleaf, July 20, 1795. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, Oct. 30 and Nov. 9, 1795. Washington Letters, War Department.

building, but soon difficulties arose due to Mr. Hadfield's determination to change the plans that had been adopted. He was not allowed to have his way and resigned, but shortly concluded to yield his views and was reinstated.[1] The work on the president's house was so well advanced that by the first of December the walls were within a few feet of the eaves.[2]

It was during the summer of 1795 that the Great Hotel was completed sufficiently to be covered in, under the direction of James Hoban, acting by the orders of the commissioners, who secured the funds from Blodgett. As these officials state, they had obtained from Blodgett "$2000 in cash and $14,000 in notes well endorsed." The proportion of cash to paper in this instance was typical of many of the enterprises of the new city.[3] The hotel building stood in this unfinished state for many years.

In the vicinity of the sites of both of the public buildings and on the public lots in the adjoining squares were erected a number of structures, mostly of frame, for the use and accommodation of the workmen and also to shelter the material. Bells were installed at both buildings to summon the workmen, and in 1795 began the use at the capitol, at least, of one of those temporary structures for religious uses. As early as the middle of June, 1795, public worship was regularly held at the capitol every Sunday morning.[4] Rev. George Ralph, the rector of Christ Episcopal Church, officiated on these occasions. Mr. Ralph had purchased for $2400 from the commissioners a house on the north side of East Capitol Street, just east of

[1] Washington was consulted by the city officials about Mr. Hadfield's proposals, which he opposed, adding, "As the present plan is nobody's but a compound of everybody's." Nov. 7, 1795. War Department Manuscripts.

[2] Report of Committee to the House, March 11, 1796. Amer. State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 142. Also contains an account of the state of the capitol and general city expenditures.

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book, June 24, 1795. Commissioners to George Budd. The latter, with Henry Pratt, bought the Blodgett property for Bickley.

[4] *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser*, June 17, 1795. Copy in Harvard University Library.

1st Street (Lot 10, Square 728), which had been occupied by Mr. Hallet, and here he opened a school both for day and boarding pupils.[1] It was in the building at the capitol, probably a carpenter shop, where church services were held each sabbath that the Washington lodge of masons in the summer of 1795 observed St. John's Day by attending service, when an address was delivered by Rev. Mr. Ralph, who was the grand chaplain of masons of Maryland. "After public worship," the published announcement reads, "the brethren will return in procession to the Little Hotel to refreshment."[2] The Little Hotel was located on the north side of F Street, seventy-five feet east of 15th, and was built by James Hoban. As the above is the earliest reference made to the hotel, it may be concluded that this pioneer tavern in that section of the city was opened about June, 1795.

The earliest record of a hotel within the limits of the city is that of John Travers on the Eastern Branch, that invited public patronage as early as the summer of 1793. There was also Mark Ward's Tavern at Greenleaf's Point, where passage could be engaged on the packet plying between Georgetown, Greenleaf's Point and Alexandria.[3]

On the block to the east of the Little Hotel a post-office for the city of Washington began business in July, 1795. The location was the north side of F Street, between 13th and 14th streets, and the first postmaster, Thomas Johnson, Jr., who was also serving as secretary to the board of commissioners, announced that he had "opened the post-office at his house on F Street, Square No. 253."[4]

His appointment was made in June 24, 1795, and in tendering him the position the assistant postmaster-general, writing from

[1] *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser*, June 17, 1795. Copy in Harvard University Library.

[2] The same.

[3] *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser*, July 17, 1795. The fare from Georgetown to the Point by the packet was seventeen cents, and from there to Alexandria thirty-three cents. The landing place at the Point was Morris and Nicholson's wharf, foot of 6th Street.

[4] The same.

Philadelphia on that date, states that "the contractor who carries the mail from Baltimore to Alexandria has represented to me that the road which leads past your house is not so good as the old road and also that it is considerably further." He asks for information on this point.[1]

This allusion to the post road constructed by the commissioners through the city determines its course in that portion as following from the capitol what was known as the F Street ridge rather than Pennsylvania Avenue, which at that time had not been opened and was still unredeemed from the swampy condition which marked the line of that thoroughfare from the capitol as far west perhaps as 13th Street.[2]

Mr. Johnson served as postmaster of the city only six months, dying in December, 1795.[3]

His successor, Christopher Richmond, who entered upon his duties the first of the following year, had just completed a service of twelve months as bookkeeper and paymaster in the office

[1] History of the City Post-Office. Madison Davis. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 6.

[2] As late as 1812 a writer in the *National Intelligencer* stated that the section south of Pennsylvania Avenue to the Tiber was a swamp. The northern border of the Tiber as delineated on the King Plats had a diagonal course from near its mouth, about at the foot of 17th Street to the northeast, crossing C Street at about 13th Street, thence to Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th Street, thence south, crossing the centre market square to B Street. The course of this waterway, much narrower in its flow, was then along B Street, turning to the north between 6th and 7th streets, and again touching Pennsylvania Avenue, and thence along that thoroughfare to 3d Street, where it bent to the north, crossing Pennsylvania Avenue at 2d Street and thence in a northeasterly direction to the northern bounds of the city.

[3] The office of secretary to the board of commissioners was abolished after Mr. Johnson's death, and the official notices formerly signed by that official were subsequently issued over the name of Thomas Munroe, clerk, the latter taking the place of John M. Gantt, who had resigned. Mr. Gantt, thereafter, devoted his time to his duties as recorder of deeds. Another office established in the early days of the existence of the board, namely that of treasurer of the city, was abolished some six months later. William Deakins, Jr., who had held the place from the beginning, was notified that the office had been done away with "as unnecessary." Proceedings of Commissioners, July 28, 1796. His duties also devolved upon the clerk.

of the commissioners, where of course he had been associated with his predecessor, who was the secretary of the board. But he too lived but a short time after taking the office, as in five months he was dead. It is conjectured that he, like Mr. Johnson, kept the post-office in his residence, the latter being located at the southeast corner of 13th and F streets. It is quite evident the business of the office was not very large, as both of the first two incumbents were in addition able to perform the duties in connection with the work in the office of the commissioners.

The vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Richmond was filled by the appointment on May 26, 1796, of Lund Washington, Jr., who was the son of Lund Washington, for a number of years in the employ of General Washington as steward of the Mount Vernon estate, during the latter's absence in the period of the war of the revolution. Mr. Washington probably also followed the example of his predecessors and had the post-office in the house where he lived. The location was on the north side of East Capitol Street, a short distance east of 1st Street. This change in the location of such an important centre was no doubt viewed by the partisans of the east and west sections of the city with mixed feelings of joy and disappointment. But for the next three years the people of the east end of the city enjoyed the satisfaction as well as the convenience of having the post-office in their midst.[1]

In the spring of 1795 T. Wilson brought from Norfolk, Va., type and a printing press, and began on the 22d of May the publication of a weekly newspaper under the title of the *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser*. The office was at $4\frac{1}{2}$ and P streets, S. W., and as the first newspaper printed in the new city, it was no doubt regarded at the time as an omen of its rising greatness. The printing office at Greenleaf's Point, as the editor designated the location, also offered to the public "Carey's war map, writing paper, writing ink, ink powder, etc."[2]

It may also be looked upon as significant of the current ex-

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 143, Vol. 6.

[2] *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser*, July 17, 1795. Copy in Harvard University Library.

pectation of the day relative to the section of the city that was thought to have the best prospects, that the publisher established himself at Greenleaf's Point, although it may be surmised that the neighborhood of the most extensive of the building operations of the syndicate had something to do with his choice. How long this pioneer newspaper continued is not known, but it is supposed that it was about a year.[1]

At the time of beginning the publication, the *Columbian Chronicle* of Georgetown, a semi-weekly, was then completing a year and a half of its existence.

All other avenues of securing money for the city having been closed, it became apparent during the last days of 1795 that an appeal to congress would have to be made. As is clearly shown, this course was not decided upon except as a last resort. For five years the work of creating a federal seat had been prosecuted without help from the general government and without recourse to congress. Not since the close of the bitter and prolonged contest over the residence bill in the year 1790 had the subject been brought before the national legislature in any shape or form except the amendatory law extending the District bounds. It was with evident reluctance that the chief spirit in the new enterprise, the president of the United States, decided upon a course that might subject the enterprise anew to the perils of the antagonisms, the jealousies and the partisan feeling that were quiescent but not obliterated.

The expression as well as the spirit of the president's message which accompanied the memorial to congress of the commissioners was tactful and reassuring, and, moreover, no appropriation from the public treasury was sought, but only permission to use the city lots owned by the government as a basis for a loan. But it was realized from the experience in practically all the money markets of the world that such a security would

[1] The Harvard University Library has seven numbers, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin three, and the Library of Congress one. Another number was discovered in a house on the eastern shore in the year 1904, but with these exceptions all record of this newspaper has been lost. At first a weekly, a change was made to semi-weekly at some date between July 27 and Oct. 17.

not be sufficient, and so in the last sentence of the memorial it was asked that "in case the property so pledged should prove inadequate to the purpose of repayment, the United States will make good the deficiency."[1]

The president expressed the belief that "if the remaining resources are properly cherished, so as to prevent the loss of property by hasty and numerous sales" that all the buildings required can be completed in season without the aid of congress. The memorial emphasized the same point and called attention to the probable depreciation of values, if so large a portion of the city property was placed on the market as would be needed to raise the required funds. On the other hand, it was urged if this property could be held until the seat of government was removed, the lots could be disposed of at prices far beyond their present value. And then rising in their forecast of the city's future, the commissioners asserted that with such an asset "not only all sums now borrowed on that foundation may be repaid but much property reserved for the disposal of the United States."

The president mentioned in the course of his message that one of the city commissioners was in the city for the purpose of giving further information, if desired. He referred to Alexander White, whose experience as a member of the house in the first two congresses pointed him out as the one who would be most likely to be of service at such a critical time.

The memorial read in the house January 8 was referred to a select committee, but in the meantime Mr. White, not waiting to be called on for information, busied himself in visiting the members, or, in more modern terms, lobbying. His experience as given in a letter to his colleague indicates that species of activity had its difficulties.[2]

"The gentlemen whose minds I ought to penetrate," he writes, "and to impress with favorable sentiments, attend the House

[1] Message of the president and memorial of the commissioners, Jan. 8, 1796. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 133.

[2] White to Thornton, Philadelphia, Jan. 20, 1796. J. Henley Smith collection.

from ten to three, dine from three to five, visit mornings and evenings, the same hours I must visit them. Often I miss them at their lodgings or find them in mixed companies, so that although I have scarcely allowed myself to eat or sleep I have not been able to converse with more than thirty men, including the known friends of the measure."

He adds that he favored bringing the matter forward at once, but Mr. Madison counselled delay, "and the president is desirous that it should be delayed 'till the opinions of the members can be fully collected and wishes me to remain 'till this can be done."

Five days later the committee submitted a report to the house, which gave an account of the progress made in preparing the new city for its intended uses, and stated as the opinion of the committee that the funds derivable from the city property "are fully adequate . . . without any aid from the treasury of the United States."[1]

According to the report the expenditures amounted to $374,250, which included $192,000 from the states of Virginia and Maryland, $96,652 for 200 lots sold to individuals and $106,578 from Greenleaf, Morris and Nicholson. The estimate of the commissioners as to the value of the lots still owned by the public is given as $1,393,790, based upon the average price of the lots sold. The transaction with Greenleaf, Morris and Nicholson was mentioned, but nothing was said of their failure to pay the whole of the second instalment of the purchase money, although the commissioners are reported by the committee as being of the opinion that it would be unsafe "to calculate on strict punctuality in the payment of the instalments as they become due from their debtors, though they assure the committee that there will eventually be no loss."

What was to be done to have the place ready for the use of the government was stated by the committee to be the completion of the two buildings then under way, the erection of a building for the judiciary, and another for the four executive depart-

[1] Report of committee, Jan. 25, 1796. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 136.

ments, "and such improvements in the streets as may be essentially requisite for the public convenience." The estimate for completing the whole was $700,000, but it was believed that it would be necessary to expend, till the year 1800, the sum of $140,000 annually. Allowing $40,000 annually on account of payments by the city debtors, there would therefore be a deficiency in the funds of $100,000. While the committee gave as the opinion of the commissioners that the sale of the public property, even under the most unfavorable circumstances, would be adequate to the purpose, yet the committee believed such a policy "would be a wanton sacrifice of the public interest and justified only by the most urgent necessity, which the committee conceives does not exist."

The committee concluded that if the state of the public finances would admit of it, that annual advances from the public treasury would be the most economical and certain, so the conclusion was reached that the only mode that could with propriety be adopted would be that of a loan secured on the property.

The committee then recommended two resolutions. The first to authorize the president to borrow a sum not exceeding $500,000, nor more than $200,000 in one year to be secured on the public property in the city, the United States to guarantee the deficiency should the sale of the lots so pledged as security for the loan not produce a sufficient sum. The loan was to be repaid at any time after the year 1803 by instalments not exceeding in any one year one-fifth of the whole sum borrowed. The second resolution required the commissioners to make reports every six months to the secretary of the treasury, to be laid before congress.

The course of the discussion for the first two days the subject was before the house centred on the amount of the loan and the rate of interest, the latter being left by the committee to the discretion of the president. They were, however, not lacking suggestions that after all the loan was only an indirect appropriation. But it was maintained by the friends of the measure that when the government removed to the new city

that property values would be so enhanced that the public lots would be ample to pay back the proposed loan. The members were reminded that up to that day not one shilling of public money had been spent on the permanent seat. Prudence and economy, it was said, forbade the sale at this time of the public property there. It was further urged if this application of the commissioners was granted, public confidence would be fully established in the certainty of the government going there, while a contrary course would convey the idea that the government was not serious. One of the speakers intimated there had been waste and extravagance in the expenditures. When a vote was reached the resolutions were adopted, leaving, however, the amount of the loan a blank, and then the report was referred again to the committee with instructions to bring in a bill.

Nearly three weeks elapsed before a bill was reported, and then the debate stretched over portions of four days. Objection was made to tying up the public property by this loan as likely to interfere with the sale of lots, and an amendment was proposed to substitute as the basis of the loan the credit of the United States. Again the criticism was heard that the commissioners had not been economical, and that the public buildings, especially the president's house, were too magnificent. As one of the speakers insisted, it must be expected that everything else will be in proportion, and that even "the officers who go into these palaces must have their salaries proportioned to the grandeur of their habitations."

The bill was sent back to the committee and four were added to its membership. The committee was instructed to make an inquiry as to whether any alterations ought to be made in the plans of the public buildings, and it was suggested that if the president's house was thought to be too large for its intended purpose that it could be fitted up for the use of congress.

Some two weeks elapsed before the committee was prepared to make a report, and then on the 11th of March the house was informed that in the opinion of the committee "no alterations can with propriety now be made in the plans of the public

buildings." As to the expenditures, past and future, the house is referred to the first report and the committee submitted a statement from Commissioner White, giving more in detail the various items of revenue and expenditures and estimates as to the sums required.[1]

It was not until the last day of March, three months after the subject had first been brought to its attention, that the house turned again to this report and the bill which embodied the recommendation of the committee. This time only one day was given to its consideration, and then the objection was raised for the first time which has so often been heard in discussions on District affairs during the century that has elapsed. One of the speakers said that he did not consider the United States under any obligations to provide accommodations for the government in the federal city, while another speaker exclaimed that on precisely the same principle that congress guaranteed a loan for the city of Washington, it might guarantee loans for all the cities in the Union. "Why a loan for the city of Washington in particular," he asked; "was there any reason why the different cities in the Union shall be taxed for that city!"

This view was held by the member from Philadelphia, and his opposition to the measure, as well as that of other members from the state of Pennsylvania, was attributed in the course of the debate to their desire to retain the seat of government in Philadelphia. The letters of Mr. White to his associates on the board betray the strain of these anxious days, and while the vote in the house gave a majority of over two-thirds for the bill, yet the minority evidently made up in zeal and activity for what it lacked in numbers.

The bill was received in the senate April 1 and referred to a committee. The latter part of the month it was reported back and debated for a couple of days. Then its consideration was postponed for a week, and when taken up again May 3d various amendments were proposed and rejected, and the following day the bill was passed by a little more than a majority vote.

[1] Report of committee, March 11, 1796. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 142.

The signature of the president was attached to the bill May 8, 1796.

A glimpse of the current thought of the day is to be found in the comments of Thomas Twining, an Englishman and an official in the Indian service, who was in Philadelphia while this bill was before congress. Mr. Twining was travelling for pleasure and observation, and decided to go as far south as Baltimore and Washington. At the latter place he expected to see Thomas Law, whom he had heard of in India. In speaking of Mr. Law's large land purchases in the new city he observes, "It was, however, considered an adventure of much risk, for doubt was entertained not only whether in case of General Washington's death the proposed change would take place, but whether the removal of the seat of government would carry with it the augmentation of commerce and population which Mr. Law anticipated and which was essential to the success of his speculation."[1] Another foreigner who was a visitor to Washington in the fall of 1795 and the following spring, states that so strong was the opposition in congress to granting the aid asked for on behalf of the city "that the petition was suffered to lie on the table unattended to for many weeks: nor was the prayer of it complied with until a number of gentlemen that were very deeply interested in the improvement of the city went round to the different members and made interest with them in person to give their assent to the measure."[2] Mr. Weld found that there were many, particularly in Philadelphia, "who are still very adverse to the removal of the seat of government thither and are doing all in their power to check the progress of the buildings in the city and to prevent the Congress from meeting there at the appointed time." The Duke de la Liancourt found traces of the same feeling of hostility to the new centre.

Seven months passed before the commissioners were able to

[1] Travels in America One Hundred Years Ago. Thomas Twining, New York, 1893, p. 58.

[2] Travels through the States of North America. Isaac Weld, Jr., London, Vol. 1, pp. 64–89.

place the loan they had been authorized to make. In the meantime in order that the building operations of the year might be started, money was borrowed from the Bank of Columbia on the personal note of the commissioners, further secured by "two unquestioned sureties," and an attempt was made to negotiate a loan at the Bank of the United States, which was not successful. What was called an "accommodation loan" was obtained from "some of the proprietors of the city," which the latter secured from the Bank of Columbia on their notes.[1]

Another effort to secure a loan was described in the first report to congress made by the city authorities in accordance with the law authorizing the loan.[2] They state that they had sent instructions to a banking firm in Amsterdam, Holland, to negotiate a loan of $200,000. To their letter of May 16, 1796, they had received a reply dated September 6, in which they were informed "that the unfavorable circumstances of the times, the penury which then existed, made it impossible to succeed at that moment." The bankers held out hopes, which were not realized, of a possibility of accomplishing something later on.

The commissioners add that "the amelioration of our finances during the present season," referring undoubtedly to the payment of the large proportion of the Morris and Greenleaf instalment due for that year, was "accomplished by the original funds of the city — a circumstance which authorizes the pleasing hope that if we should not obtain all the advantages intended by the guarantee, our own resources will enable us to prepare the necessary buildings in time for the reception of Congress." With these brave words of assurance the report closes.

It was not until the 14th of December that one of the various attempts to fill the loan met with success. On that date the legislature of Maryland adopted a resolution to loan the city $100,000 in United States six per cent stock at par bearing

[1] Commissioners to the President, May 31, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] Letter from the secretary of the treasury, transmitting the copy of a letter from the commissioners, etc. Presented in the house Dec. 29, 1796.

an immediate interest of six per cent. As security the commissioners were required to give a bond to the state for the amount of the loan, and in their individual capacities a further bond of $200,000.[1] But it was found that the market price for the stock was 80½, so that out of the sale of the first lot placed on the market, which was $20,000, the city funds realized but $16,503.[2]

Pen pictures of the city as it appeared in this period are to be found in the volumes descriptive of their American travels by Thomas Twining, Isaac Weld, Jr., a young Irishman of education, Francis Baily, then in his early manhood but later on distinguished for his scientific studies, and the Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt, an accomplished member of the French assembly who had been obliged to leave his country on account of political persecution. Twining was in Washington in the spring of 1796, Weld and Baily in the fall of the same year and the Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt in the spring of the following year.

Twining was eleven hours in the stage coach travelling from Baltimore to Georgetown, the road for the most part passing through thick woods. He started from Georgetown on horseback to visit Mr. Law, who had just come to live in Washington, and with his bride, Elizabeth Custis, the granddaughter of Mrs. Washington, was occupying the house just completed at the southeast corner of 6th and N streets, S. W. Mr. Twining states that "having crossed an extensive tract of level country somewhat resembling an English heath, I entered a large wood through which a very imperfect road had been made, principally by removing the trees or rather the upper parts of them, in the usual manner. After some time, this indistinct way assumed more the appearance of a regular avenue, the trees having been cut down in a straight line."[3] If this was the new post road through the city, its condition shows the primitive state of the public work as then carried out. After travelling along this

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Dec. 23, 1796.
[2] The same, Jan. 24, 1797.
[3] Travels in America. Twining, p. 100.

road for about half a mile, Twining records that he "came out upon a large spot, cleared of wood, in the centre of which I saw two buildings on an extensive scale and some men at work on one of them." On inquiring, he found one of the buildings was the capitol and the other was intended for a tavern. On every side he saw "a thick wood pierced with avenues."

"Excepting the streets and avenues," observes Weld, "and a small part of the ground adjoining the public buildings, the whole place is covered with trees."

Mr. Baily found Georgetown to be a handsome town, and he indulged in a prediction, which after an interval of a century came true, "that it will in the course of time lose its name of Georgetown and adopt the general one of Washington."

"Not much more than one half the city is cleared," he observed. "The rest is in woods and most of the streets which are laid out are cut through these woods . . . and appear like broad avenues in a park bounded on each side by thick woods."

He records as something he considered will be regarded as remarkable in the years when the city has grown great and prosperous that he saw some boys out hunting "actually kill a brace of partridges in what will be one of the most public streets of the city."

The French statesman was more interested in the prices of city lots and the speculative ventures of Law and Morris and others. He declares that even at the time of his visit in the spring of 1797 those concerned in the new city from a real estate point of view had come to the conclusion that "the immense extent of ground marked out for the city would not be so speedily covered with houses as was expected. From that instant the common interest ceased and the proprietors became rivals." Then, he asserts, the efforts were to advance one or the other quarter of the city at the expense of the others or without regard to any other interest.

As has been already pointed out sectional rivalry was born at a much earlier period in the career of the city than that of the visit of the French traveller.

It is also interesting to note that of this group of intelligent

observers, two of them, Mr. Weld and the Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt, were impressed with the prospects for the future of the city as a commercial centre. As General Washington had concluded at least two decades before, that the Potomac was destined to become the great highway of trade between the eastern sea-coast and the western country, so these men in the year 1796 saw the trend of the material development of the country in the same direction. At that time the trade of Georgetown had declined, the French traveller recorded, owing principally to the falling off in the cultivation of tobacco. The European vessels that came to its port for the produce of the country were obliged first to go to Baltimore with their cargoes of goods in order to find a market. For at that time Baltimore and Philadelphia were the principal trading centres for the western country. To these places the large covered wagons drawn by four horses came bringing the flour and other produce from the country about Pittsburg and also from Kentucky and Tennessee through the Shenandoah Valley. On the return the supplies of goods, mostly of foreign manufacture, filled the wagons. As these travellers pointed out, when the Potomac River was made navigable, then naturally for the expensive land carriage would be substituted water transportation.

The Potomac Company was then pushing forward its work in overcoming the obstacles to the navigation of the Potomac, and it was thought that in the near future a similar improvement would be attempted in the Shenandoah River. The Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt inspected the work that was going on along the Potomac River, as far as the Great Falls. He found the canal around the Little Falls on the Maryland side entirely finished. He states it was a mile and a half in length (but actually a little over two miles), with four locks.[1]

At the Great Falls the canal which was on the Virginia side was finished, he states, but the locks were yet to be constructed.

[1] A few miles above is a tributary of the Potomac that is now known as Cabin John Run, and is spanned by an arch of masonry to carry the pipes of the Washington Aqueduct. An early name of this stream, of which the modern name is evidently a corruption, was Captain John Branch. See advertisement in *Centinel of Liberty*, March 28,

In the meanwhile vessels loaded with flour and tobacco, the principal articles brought down the river, came to the head of the canal at the Great Falls, where the hogsheads and barrels were taken out and rolled down an inclined plane of wood temporarily placed in the unfinished locks. They were again loaded on vessels that passed down the river, freed by the efforts of the company from the obstructions to navigation, and thence through the locks at the Little Falls to the river, where the passage to Georgetown was quickly made.[1]

The volume of business handled by the Potomac Company even in the unfinished state of the river improvement increased to such an extent that three years later a dividend was declared which, however, also proved to be the only one paid.

While it is recorded by the travellers that the commerce of Alexandria had not fallen off to the same degree as that of Georgetown, owing to the greater extent of country of which it was the only port, still it was in much the same situation, as the goods supplied to the traders in exchange for the products brought to its port were obtained from Baltimore. Both towns were apparently growing, for in the years 1795 and 1796 the Maryland Legislature passed four separate acts authorizing the extension of streets in Georgetown, and one for an addition to the area of the town, while in the case of Alexandria, the Virginia legislature in the year 1796 authorized an addition to its area.[2]

1800, offering the plantation of Isaiah Boone for sale, "lying in the fork of Captain John Branch one mile from the main road leading from Georgetown to Frederick and three miles from Montgomery Court House."

[1] See also *Centinel of Liberty*, April 4, 1797, for an account of the state of the work. In the Gallatin report on roads and canals, American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 809, the length of the canal at the Great Falls, including a basin and five locks, is stated to be 1200 yards, while the canal at the Little Falls, including three locks, has a length of 3814 yards.

[2] The mayors of Georgetown were elected annually, Robert Peter was made mayor by the act of incorporation of Dec. 25, 1789; in 1790 he was succeeded by Thomas Beall, followed by Uriah Forrest, 1792; John Threlkeld, 1793; Peter Casanove, 1794; William Turner, 1795; Daniel Reintzell, 1796; and Lloyd Beall, 1797. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. II, p. 201.

# CHAPTER XI

## USE OF THE RESERVATIONS

It was not alone to congress that the commissioners expressed at this period confidence in the future of the city and especially in the value of the public property. For it was in the spring of 1796, when the building operations were being carried on by borrowed money and congress was hesitating about affording the financial aid that had been asked, that the commissioners declined an offer to purchase one hundred lots at $350 per lot on the ground that the price named was $150 less than what had been paid in the previous year. It was at this time they reached the conclusion to begin the opening of Pennsylvania Avenue from the president's house to the capitol. While repeatedly urged to do this before, as they state in a letter to Mr. Burnes, yet they have refused "while your crops were on the ground. Now the ground is unoccupied."[1] With their intimation early in the year to Mr. Burnes not to sow seed on the line of Pennsylvania Avenue, the commissioners felt that they could not be held responsible for any damage to crops in the near future when that thoroughfare should be opened, as was apparently contemplated. They discussed in a long letter to the president the disposition of the public grounds in the city, and having already recommended sites for the National university and mint, they add that the establishment of a botanical garden has been lately suggested, and if the site proposed, which is not named, does not meet with the president's approval that a portion of the national university site can be devoted to that purpose.[2]

[1] Commissioners to David Burnes, Feb. 19, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] Commissioners to the President, Oct. 1, 1796. Commissioners' Letter Book.

It is further suggested that "the Mall might be offered as sites for foreign ministers without diverting the grounds lying between the president's house and the capitol from the purpose of being public pleasure grounds. Indeed, we are informed that such were Major L'Enfant's ideas in laying off the city." In fact, they had already written to M. Frigo, the minister from Spain, that a site for a residence for his use would be appropriated, and suggesting that he come to the city and indicate his preference as to the location.

The opinion is also expressed in the letter to the president that the site proposed for a Marine Hospital on the Eastern Branch between D, G and 19th streets, S. E., where in later years the almshouse and city jail were built, might better be divided into lots and sold, as there would be no such use of it as proposed for years to come. In addition the benefit to the funds of the city was pointed out as the ground cost only $5333 at $68 per acre, while at the current prices for lots, including the water lots, it would yield $48,000.[1]

The adjoining property holders were willing, it was stated, to have the land there disposed of. No decision was made at that time, but as will be seen later on the question of the right of the commissioners to divert from public use any of the land received for such uses became the subject of a long and animated controversy. The commissioners again renewed their recommendation that the public spaces be designated, and Washington, early in the following year, approved a list of seventeen reservations. But as the plan of the city on which they were delineated was not attached to the president's official proclamation, his successor, John Adams, in the following year, corrected that oversight, and then on July 23, 1798, the public spaces were determined as they exist to-day.

[1] Almost a quarter of a century before the city poorhouse was built on this reservation, making use of the ground for the first time, the east half of the square on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 9th and 10th streets, S. E., was purchased by the United States and a building for a naval hospital was erected which is still in use. W. B. 3, p. 26, Trustees of Lewis Deblois to the United States, June 4, 1821. The balance of the square was not acquired by the government until 1865.

The building regulations, which in their first form demanded a higher grade of structures than was usual at that period, had been increased in their requirements by the regulation of July 30, 1795. By this measure it was directed that in houses of three stories the walls of the cellars were to be two feet thick, those of the first story eighteen inches thick, the second story fourteen inches and the third story nine inches, while the walls of the cellars of two-story houses were to be eighteen inches, the first story fourteen inches and the second story nine inches. Party walls were subjected to the same regulations. But by the summer of 1796 it was found that the requirements that only brick or stone be used in the outer and party walls of houses, and that no house shall be higher than forty feet to the roof in any part of the city or lower than thirty-five on any of the avenues, to use the words of the president in his order impeded "the settlement in the city of mechanics and others whose circumstances do not admit of erecting houses of the description authorized by the regulation." The enforcement was suspended until the first Monday in December, 1800.[1]

For five years the prohibition against wooden construction had been maintained, and the change at this time showed the desire on the part of the city authorities to encourage building in the city. The great area of the city, as is evident from the accounts of travellers already referred to, contained but few buildings, and these were more numerous in the vicinity of Greenleaf's Point than in any other section. There Thomas Law had taken up his residence, renting a house built by the syndicate. In the same general section Morris and Nicholson started in June, 1796, the largest single building operation up to that time attempted in the new city. From plans prepared by William Lovering, who combined as was quite common then

[1] This suspension was renewed and continued by the president of the United States from time to time from the first Monday of December, 1800, to the first day of January, 1818. By the charter of 1820 the right to make building regulations was conferred on the city authorities. All the various building regulation orders, four in number, issued from 1791 to 1796, are found in a digest of the laws of the corporation of Washington. Samuel Burch. Washington, 1823, p. 326.

and for many years later the business of builder with the profession of architect, they began the erection of twenty two-story houses covering the entire west frontage of the Square on South Capitol Street between M and N streets, and also a portion of the N Street front.[1] John Nicholson had come to the city to look after the interests of the syndicate, although William Cranch, who had been serving as their Washington representative while Mr. Greenleaf was a member had been continued in the same relation. But it was felt, no doubt, that so much depended upon the Washington property that the personal attention of the principals was necessary. Robert Morris followed shortly and made his first visit to the new city. The presence of the two principals served to give new life and activity to their affairs. They were in arrears in the payments of the instalments of the purchase money of the public lots and the commissioners had just engaged the legal services of Edward Tilghman of Philadelphia to bring suit against Mr. Morris in that city.[2]

But this last resort was averted for the time by a liberal cash payment.[3] As an evidence of a willingness on the part of the city authorities to facilitate the efforts of private enterprise by making such public improvements as lay within their limited means to accomplish may be cited their advertisement for levelling New Jersey Avenue south of the capitol, thus furnishing a thoroughfare to the scene of building activity in that section of the city.[4] When Nicholson arrived in the city about the first of September, and with the view of notifying all who had business with him or Mr. Morris, of his presence, a notice was inserted in the *Washington Gazette*, stating that he would be at Scott's Tav-

[1] William Lovering, who was an Englishman, established his home in Alexandria (*The Times and Alexandria Advertiser*, Nov. 11, 1797), but continued business in the new city.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Sept. 12, 1796.

[3] Commissioners to Washington. Commissioners' Letter Book, Oct. 31, 1796. "Morris and Nicholson have relieved us of $50,000 of our bank debt and they have reason to expect $20,000."

[4] *Washington Gazette*, June 29, 1796.

ern during the day and at the Union Tavern in Georgetown in the evening.[1] The first named hostelry was also known as the Little Hotel, while the Georgetown tavern was a new structure just erected by subscription of a number of citizens of Georgetown "as a useful improvement to the town." The building was located at the northeast corner of 30th and M streets, and a portion of it is still standing. It cost $16,000 in the year 1796 and under the terms of the subscription it was to be offered at public auction on the first Monday in May, 1800. The building was of brick, three stories in height, sixty feet front, with a depth of sixty-three feet. On the second floor was "an elegant assembly room 60 × 30 feet." There were thirteen lodging rooms on the second and third floors and ten in the garret.[2] It was decided to give some formal recognition of the big building undertaking near New Jersey Avenue, and so in the latter part of September, when the houses begun in the previous June had been roofed in, Messrs. Morris and Nicholson provided a barbecue which was attended by workmen and spectators to the number of 200. "We do not recollect," observes the *Washington Gazette* of September 28, "ever to have seen a greater appearance of social glee on a similar occasion. The buildings are the greatest effort of private enterprise of any in the city and for the time in which they were building the greatest in the United States. . . . We must note that this is the first and only entire front built on any square in the city." These buildings were never finished, and stood in that condition for many years and gradually went to ruin, so that no trace of them remained in modern days. They were seized by Daniel Carroll of Duddington for debt, and while nominally in his possession the question of ownership was not settled until some seven years later, when the suit was concluded. Their erection was to satisfy the terms of purchase of land from Mr. Carroll, who insisted upon a compliance. An effort was made to compromise by the payment of money, but the owner of the land

[1] *Washington Gazette*, Aug. 31, 1796.
[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Feb. 18, 1800.

declined.[1] It must have been a difficult thing for Morris and Greenleaf to provide the money for this undertaking, for already then the shadows of a debtor's prison was upon them, and their career of financing with paper was to end in scarcely six months. But of this there was no indication in the buoyant and hopeful temperament of Mr. Morris, then past his sixtieth year. He acknowledged that he felt doubtful about the value of his Washington property when he left Philadelphia, but when he came in the atmosphere of the new city and found purchasers there for his lots at treble and quadruple the prices he had thought of selling them, then the prospect changed.

He recognized that this change in the situation was due in part to the improvements the syndicate had started, and expressed the conviction that if he and Mr. Nicholson could remain that the outlook would become still brighter. "I am delighted with the place," he adds in the course of a letter to his son-in-law, dated Nov. 1, 1796. "Nature has done for it all that could be desired, and I see that man will soon do the rest." [2] Carroll had his way, and in addition to the erection, by the syndicate, of the buildings which were supposed to enhance the value of the lots in the vicinity which he owned, he also furnished the bricks for the houses, as he was one of the large brick makers of the day. It is a question whether or not his course at that time was not the foundation for the tradition that it was due to Mr. Carroll's policy in regard to his large holdings about the capitol, in demanding high figures, that influenced the growth of the city away from the broad elevated plateau east of that structure. There is, however, no question that Mr. Carroll spent freely of his private means in building in that section of the city, and as the advertisements in the newspapers through the years offering his property for sale show, he offered it on easy terms.[3] The record of the fes-

[1] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 125.

[2] The same, p. 180.

[3] "He made every exertion for the accommodation of the first Congress in Washington by the erection of numerous buildings. He was an indulgent landlord, and always generously favored the widow and other needy tenants, yielding thousands of dollars rather than distress

tivities that marked "the covering in" of the Twenty Buildings, as they came to be called, was made in the columns of the *Washington Gazette,* which began its career June 15, 1796. It is presumed the editor of the *Impartial Observer* had not been able to make both ends meet, and so what was apparently a need at this time in the life of the city, a local newspaper, was supplied through the enterprise of Benjamin More. Who Mr. More was there is nothing available upon which to base an answer, save an advertisement in the columns of the paper of his predecessor which detailed sundry articles in the line of a general retail store that one Benjamin More offered for sale at his place at Greenleaf's Point. Of course it cannot be positively stated that the two men are identical and that he merely added to the sale of tea and coats, the issue twice a week of a newspaper. At any rate, whatever the facts may be, it is certain that he did not continue at Greenleaf's Point, for he announced in the first issue that the paper is published "at the house next west of the Hotel." [1] From this rather vague address it may be inferred that the printing office was on E Street, N. W., and probably at the northeast corner of that street and 9th. It would also be misleading to infer a tendency in the direction of the growth of the city towards the general locality chosen as the office of the paper, for then and for some years later, it was a mere guess even with those most familiar with the city which of the several sections would draw the largest share of population and improvements. There were to be found advocates of the river frontage west of Greenleaf's Point where later on the main river trade of the city was centred. The Eastern Branch region east of Greenleaf's Point had its advocates, especially from the class who expected to see the commercial resources

them for his rents. He was a friend to the poor and dispensed much private charity from his own abundant stores; but alas, the mutability of fortune deprived him of late years of the means of giving to the poor." Sketch of Daniel Carroll of Duddington on the occasion of his death. *Daily National Intelligencer,* May 15, 1849.

[1] *Washington Gazette,* June 15, 1796.

of the city expand, while there were not wanting those who looked upon the vicinity of the capitol and of the president's house and of Georgetown as likely to become the important centres. A more obvious explanation of the location of the printing office is that Mr. More, in all probability, bought out the business of John Crocker, who had on the 9th of the previous March begun the publication of the second newspaper that had appeared in the new city. This was the *Washington Advertiser*, a paper that is even less known than the *Impartial Observer*. While eleven copies have been preserved, they are all in the library of Harvard University.[1] It is a three-column quarto of eight pages about the same size as the *Impartial Observer*, which it succeeded, probably after some interval. As stated in the colophon it was "printed (every Wednesday and Saturday) by John Crocker near the hotel." [2]

Mr. More conducted his paper with much spirit, which is indicated in part by the announcement in the first issue that his object in publishing the paper was "in the first place to obtain a living, and in the second to amuse and inform his fellow mortals." There is no means of knowing whether he accomplished the second purpose, except that he failed to attain his first object, for in a little less than a year his paper ceased to appear.[3] The publication, however, was resumed Sept. 16, 1797, as a weekly instead of a semi-weekly, but early in the following spring it was abandoned.[4]

The Federal Lottery No. 2, as it was termed, the second of Blodgett's schemes for the improvement of the city, had at that time reached such a stage that announcement was made that a drawing would be begun at Georgetown and that there would

[1] The numbers are from March 12, 1796, Vol. 1, No. 2 to May 11, 1796, Vol. 1, No. 19.

[2] It may be presumed the editor was Dr. John Crocker, and that he gave up journalism to pursue his profession as a physician. As Dr. Crocker owned a house at the northeast corner of 9th and E streets, it is possible the printing office of both papers was there.

[3] *The Gazette*, July 26, 1797.

[4] A practically complete file of this newspaper is in the Library of Congress, June 11, 1796 — March 24, 1798.

be two drawings weekly, which led to the editorial comment in the *Gazette* that at such a rate it would be ten years before the drawing was completed. All those holding tickets were advised to mention them in their wills. This advice was regarded as a slur by the writer of a communication in the *Centinel of Liberty*, the Georgetown paper, and Editor More defended not only its correctness, but its wisdom.[1] The *Columbian Chronicle* of Georgetown, after an existence since December, 1793, made its last appearance May 10, 1796. During the last year of the publication, it was under the sole management of Samuel Hanson of Samuel, who was also the cashier of the Bank of Columbia.[2] The printing office and good will of *The Chronicle* was purchased by Green, English and Co., the editor entering the firm as the "Co."[3] On the 23d of May, 1796, a paper was issued by this company called the *Centinel of Liberty and Georgetown Advertiser*, which like its predecessor was a semi-weekly. From the same office was issued a weekly paper, the *Centinel and Country Gazette*, containing only matter from the semi-weekly.

The second lottery venture of Blodgett's continued to be the target of the *Gazette's* sarcasm, which developed in such a spirit of hostility as to prompt the suggestion of treating the lottery manager to a coat of tar and feathers. In its columns also appeared a communication attributed to a visitor to the city in the course of which the writer states that "in riding through your city this morning, I was struck, at a great distance, with the word Hotel inscribed in red letters upon the front of a magnificent building, half finished."

The writer concludes from what he has heard of the history of the edifice that the word was intended to "denote the character of the founder rather than the destination of the fabric, and that with this view he selected the initials of the following

[1] *Washington Gazette*, July 16, 1796.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Dec. 16, 1796. Also *National Intelligencer*, Sept. 23, 1801.

[3] After a period of nearly three years, Mr. Hanson retired from the business and the publishers were then Green and English. *Centinel of Liberty*, July 23, 1799.

Latin words, 'Hic omnes turpitudes excedit longe.'" [1] Such progress was made in the lottery drawings that the first prize was drawn by the following spring.[2] It was through the columns of the *Gazette* that a meeting of citizens was called to prepare a petition to the Maryland legislature to adopt some plan for "the policing" of the government of the city "until Congress assumes the jurisdiction." [3] There is no record of any further action in this direction. While the population at that time is unknown, yet a year later it was computed to be 2000.[4]

Certain municipal functions were vested in the commissioners by the Maryland legislature, as the issue of liquor licenses and the making of building regulations. The section of the District where the city was located had as its only other form of local government the levy court of Prince George County, composed of seven members selected by the governor of the state with the advice of the council, from those annually commissioned as justices of the peace. The function of the court was to assess property, collect the taxes, look after repairs to the roads and the repair and construction of county public buildings, take care of bridges, make allowances for the

[1] *Washington Gazette*, Sept. 28, 1796.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, March 14, 1797. The Washington contemporary still was impatient about the deliberateness of Blodgett's lottery drawing, and in the issue of the *Gazette* of July 5, appeared the following paragraph. "This day twelvemonth, Washington (alias Blodgett's) Lottery No. 2 commenced drawing but alas it is not finished, nor is there any reason to suppose it will be until the manager thinks it convenient."

[3] *Washington Gazette*, Oct. 5 and 8, 1796.

[4] The *Gazette*, Sept. 16, 1797. John Law, a son of Thomas Law, by his first wife, who came to the city for the first time in 1796 records twenty-five years later his recollections that "the area of Washington then scarcely contained five hundred inhabitants, most of the houses were mere cabins erected for the temporary use of laborers, the largest part of the beautiful avenue which connects the principal public edifices together was an impassable wilderness and the streets were not distinguished by any visible lines." Ceremonies and oration at the laying of the corner stone of the city hall, p. 8. Washington, 1820.

In the issue of June 29, 1796, the *Gazette* mentions the death of a child, "said to be the first born in the city of Washington."

support of the poor, appoint constables, overseers, etc. The constables appointed by the levy court formed the only peace force available, and there was no change in this form of government until the enactment of Feb. 27, 1801, when the new county of Washington, including the area of the city, was formed. Then the levy court was continued, but the appointment of the members was vested in the president of the United States. Georgetown and Alexandria enjoyed the governmental functions of the incorporated town of the period, while the county portion of Virginia continued under the county court, which, like the levy court of Maryland, was composed of the justices of the peace.[1]

It is probable it soon became necessary to have a place in the city for the detention of prisoners awaiting the action of the county court. At this time there was a jail in Georgetown where the town constables confined those they had arrested. Its location was on the site where the market house was built. According to a tradition a log house at New Jersey Avenue and D Street, S. E., was used as a jail, and was the first in the city. Subsequently a structure in the square on the north side of C Street a short distance east of 6th Street, N. W., was used for such purposes,[2] and was continued as a county institution under the authority of the levy court even after the year 1802, when a jail was built by a congressional appropriation and placed under the supervision of the circuit court as the jail of Washington County.

But a still larger and more ambitious civic scheme was dis-

[1] A rather curious distinction is shown in two laws passed by the Maryland assembly. One enacted in December, 1795, authorizing the Washington City canal lottery, required the managers to give bond to the commissioners of the city, while in the law of December, 1796, permitting the Georgetown market lottery the bond was to be given to the state of Maryland.

[2] In reminiscences of Washington, by George Watterston, printed in the *Intelligencer*, Nov. 29, 1845, it is stated "The first jail in Washington was a small brick edifice of three rooms which stood on a lot adjoining the bath-house on C. Street. [The bath-house was on lot 6, Square 490, on the north side of C Street, about midway between 4½ and 6th streets, N. W.] It has recently been pulled down, having become ruinous and dilapidated."

cussed in the fall of 1796. All that has been preserved of this early local government movement is a paragraph in the *Gazette* of March 18, 1797, as follows: "Last Fall it was reported, some steps were to be taken to have this city incorporated. Has this plan miscarried or has the child died for want of nourishment?" As far as known, this question was never answered, and there is no further allusion to the subject. It is interesting to speculate what the effect would have been in the form of government provided by congress for the city if it had found the city supplied with a government, just as was the case with Georgetown and Alexandria.

At this time Georgetown had reached the stage in the development of town life when organized effort was needed for the protection of property from fire, and so a meeting of "the first fire company" and "at the engine house" was called.[1]

The commissioners, who were familiar with the resources of the city, were unable to live there because of the lack of suitable houses. It was their intention, they informed Washington, May 31, 1796, to establish their homes there "as soon as ever decent houses could be had." They were severely criticised at this time because of their alleged partiality for the section of the city near the president's house and Georgetown, and this was accounted for in part by their living in Georgetown, where Mr. Law more especially conceived they were more exposed to such influences than if they had their homes in the city. Washington refers to this subject in two letters, one written in May and the other in November, and he states very positively in the first that it is his expectation that the commissioners live in the city, and then in the later letter he informs them that he expects this "to be done before the building operations of the coming year are started." [2]

Mr. Scott was building a house which he subsequently occupied and which was located just beyond the bounds of the city, between Florida Avenue and Rock Creek, a short distance north

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, March 10, 1797.

[2] Washington to the Commissioners, May 22 and Nov. 17, 1796. War Department Manuscripts.

of P Street, while early in the following year Dr. Thornton gave up his house in Georgetown and removed to the city.[1] On the 9th of July, 1796, Blodgett wrote to Dr. Thornton, "I hereby empower you to take possession of the lot No. 7 and on Square 253 and to remain in the possession thereof for twelve months for which as the house is not yet completed you can pay but half the rent, which a reference to indifferent persons may be deemed just for a finished house and in a similar situation. This rent may be expended in improvements (for the benefit of the fortunate adventurers who may draw the house) at your discretion." [2]

"The fortunate adventurers" alluded to by Blodgett were the holders of the tickets drawing prizes in Federal Lottery No. 2. At that time there was more than usual competition for the patronage of persons who risked their money in such enterprises, for tickets in Canal Lottery No. 1 were then also being offered for sale.[3]

In the previous fall the Maryland legislature had authorized Notley Young, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Lewis Deblois, George Walker, William M. Duncanson, Thomas Law and James Barry to raise by two annual lotteries the sum of $52,500 for the purpose of completing and opening the canal in the city and making it navigable.[4]

[1] "Wm. Thornton offers for sale the brick house opposite the Bank of Columbia lately occupied by the subscriber (now removed to the city of Washington)." *Centinel of Liberty*, March 17, 1797. At that time the Bank of Columbia was in a building on M Street just west of 32d Street, as the structure erected for its use further west on the north side of M Street near 34th Street was not completed until 1807. The house was offered for sale three years later by Dr. Thornton (*Centinel of Liberty*, June 3, 1800), and was then described as containing four rooms, one eighteen by twenty feet, three guest rooms, a kitchen and back building with three rooms.

[2] J. Henley Smith Papers. The house known in later years as 1331 F Street, N. W., continued to be the home of Dr. Thornton until his death.

[3] *Washington Gazette*, Nov. 9, 1796. The drawing, it was announced, would commence at Georgetown, Jan. 2, 1797. The same, Dec. 24, 1796.

[4] "Yesterday a prize of $10,000 was drawn in the Washington Canal Lottery No. 1. The fortunate ticket was No. 6747. No. 12,602

The line of the canal was delineated on the L'Enfant map and also on the engraved map, and was therefore a feature of the new city from the outset. The space allowed for the canal itself was eighty feet, while a street of the same width was provided on each side. When the attempt made by the commissioners to carry out this project was abandoned on account of want of means, then it was taken up by private enterprise, and a change was made, by direction of the president, and with the consent of the property holders who would be affected, in the course of the line of the east branch of the proposed canal as distinguished from the one to the west that was to utilize the course of St. James Creek.

The new course was chosen to avoid the additional cost of cutting through high ground and was somewhat further to the east, following 2d Street, E., from about K Street to the Eastern Branch near the foot of New Jersey Avenue, instead of pursuing a diagonal course from K Street. However, while the lottery was drawn, the work was not begun, nor was any account rendered of the proceeds of the lottery, although the commissioners called upon the managers for a report and threatened to bring the matter to the attention of the Maryland legislature. But no reply was received, and apparently no effort was made to enforce the liability of the managers under the bond given to the commissioners. It may be inferred from the character of the managers there was no surplus after paying the prizes and the expenses of the lottery.[1]

Another lottery was authorized, when on the 31st of December, 1796, the Maryland legislature granted the right to John Threlkeld, Charles A. Beatty and Samuel Turner, Jr., to raise by lottery the sum of $2000 "to pay for the ground on which the market house in Georgetown had been erected." As recited

drew a prize of $1000." *Centinel of Liberty*, April 21, 1797. Also in the issue of June 28, 1797, it is stated, a prize of $20,000 was drawn, while in the issue of July 5, that the drawing had been finished.

[1] Commissioners to Notley Young. Commissioners' Letter Book, Oct. 30, 1798. Also report of house committee on a petition to incorporate the Washington Canal Co., Feb. 11, 1802. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 258.

in the act, several citizens of the town had made contracts for the purchase of the ground and the erection of the building, expecting the funds would be secured by the voluntary contributions of the citizens. As it turned out, only sufficient money was secured to erect the building, "which is so far advanced as to be useful to the citizens at large." [1]

But these were not the only appeals made at that time for public improvements. The Georgetown Bridge Co. in the fall of 1796 issued a notice to the subscribers for the stock calling for an instalment of $60 on each share. The first payment had been made on the 1st of Nov., 1795, and the instalment payable Nov. 1, 1796, made the total paid on each share $200. The total capital stock was four hundred shares. The responsibility incurred at that day by those subscribing for stock is indicated by the notice to delinquents to pay up "or suits will be begun." [2] In fact, authority was given in the act chartering the company to pursue that course and also to retain the payments on shares made by delinquents. The powers of the company were extended by an act of Dec. 24, 1795, so as to enable it to condemn land for a road sixty feet wide extending from Georgetown to the bridge at the Little Falls. This thoroughfare became known in later years as the River Road.

The company opened the bridge for public use the middle of October, 1797, and in their advertisement of that fact and of the tolls to be charged it was called the Potomak Bridge.[3] The first description of this pioneer bridge of the large type built in the District is found in the narrative of the Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt, who saw it in the spring of 1797. "Above the smaller falls," he writes, "at a place where the Potowmack is confined to a narrow passage between mountains, a bridge has lately been erected of the same kind as the bridge of Merrymack near Newburyport in Mass.; the same architect

[1] The market house of frame was located on the south side of M Street, a short distance east of 33d Street.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 11, 1796.

[3] The same, Oct. 13, 1797. The rates were 3 cents for foot passengers, 8 cents for man and horse, 50 cents for four-wheeled, and 25 cents for two-wheeled, vehicles.

was employed on both. The bridge over the Patowmack is 120 feet in the span, . . . but is indeed disgusting for its heaviness, having an immense quantity of timber and iron wasted on it." He adds that a road is being made along the banks of the river from Georgetown to the bridge.[1] In the *Centinel of Liberty* of July 7, 1797, the advantages of the bridge are noted as chiefly affording a direct means of communication between the city of Washington and the farming countries of the northern portion of Virginia and Maryland. "The enterprise and perseverance of that most useful and public-spirited citizen, John Templeman, who gratuitously engaged in the superintendence of the work at its commencement" is given the credit for its rapid construction and success.[2]

The development of the business interests of the city was begun at this time, and on a scale that indicated the sanguine hopes of the projectors. A building of stone had been completed on the square bounded by 21st, 22d and B streets and the Potomac River, and here C. Coningham and Co. announced the product of the Washington Brewery was for sale.[3] Dr. Coningham, who was a native of England, was a practising physician, but had gone into this business as the active partner with James Greenleaf. The latter had erected the building where this pioneer brewery had been established. In the spring of 1797, some six months after the brewery had been opened, and a short time before he entered the debtors' jail, Mr. Greenleaf sold his interest in the concern to his brother-in-law, John Appleton.[4] It is probable there was a brewery in Georgetown

[1] Travels in North America, Vol. 2, p. 334.

[2] William Wirt records as witnessing some fifteen years prior to this date at his home town in Bladensburg a performance on the tight rope given by Mr. Templeman, who was then in the course of his travels as a showman. Forty years later Mr. Wirt "met in Washington a well dressed gentleman-like personage some what corpulent, who was made known to me as the paragon of my childish admiration, converted into a plain citizen and extensive dealer in city lots." Memoirs, Philadelphia, 1860, p. 26. He also was a merchant. *Centinel of Liberty*, Aug. 22, 1800.

[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 11, 1796.

[4] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 146.

at this time. At any rate in an advertisement of sale, the description indicates that a good-sized building used for such a purpose was located on P Street, west of 35th, in the year 1800.[1]

An enterprise backed by the money of Thomas Law was started in the year 1797 when a large building for the making of sugar was erected on the square bounded by 1st, 2d and M streets and the Eastern Branch, S. E. It was built under the immediate supervision of James Peircy, who had been engaged in the same business in England. James Barry already had a store near his wharf at the foot of New Jersey Avenue, where a ferry had lately been established. Here Joseph Wheat announced the opening of his new tavern.[2] Another hostelry solicited the patronage of the public through an advertisement signed by Elizabeth Leslie, who named her house the Capitol Hill Tavern, and while the name is the only clew to its location, still that early use of a title which long has been familiar as the designation of the broad plateau east of the capitol indicates generally its place.

A hotel keeper of a later day also figures in the advertising columns of the local newspaper, for there is found a card signed by William O'Neale, who was engaged in the cooper business and had erected on the north side of I Street, just west of 20th Street, a three-story brick house, which in subsequent years, enlarged, became the celebrated Franklin Hotel.[3]

The Eastern Branch Hotel opened in the fall of 1796 by William Tunnicliff, an Englishman, also sought for public patronage, and its location on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 8th and 9th streets, S. E., where the building still stands, was no doubt looked upon at that day as a specially convenient site, as it was on the road leading from the upper Eastern Branch Ferry through the city.[4] It was at this hotel that the Washington Dancing Assembly was held in December of that year, the earliest affair of the sort in the new city

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, June 6, 1800. It was owned by Caesar Lowry.
[2] *Washington Gazette*, Oct. 18, 1796.
[3] The same, June 29 and Nov. 5, 1796.
[4] The same, Dec. 14, 1796.

of which there is any record, although there is a notice in the *Gazette* (Jan. 28, 1797) that the Washington Amicable Dancing Assembly will commence February 2d at Scott's Little Hotel. It was at the latter place that a birthnight ball was held on Feb. 22d, and there was one at the Union Tavern in Georgetown, probably the first of the events that became an annual custom in Washington as was common in other towns in observance of the birthday of the first president.

It was thought necessary for the information of those who desired to attend the assembly in December at the Eastern Branch Hotel to state that the hotel was "near Mr. Duncanson's." The latter built a house on the triangular plot of ground bounded by South Carolina Avenue, D, 6th and 7th streets, S. E., which still stands, although somewhat changed. Mr. Duncanson, in addition to the large purchases of city lots, for which he paid but failed to get the deeds, had formed a partnership with James Ray, a fellow countryman from England, to carry on a commission business. The principal office was in Philadelphia, but a branch had been established in Georgetown. Owing to losses sustained by Mr. Duncanson in city property, the firm was dissolved in June of the following year.[1] The provisions for a militia as found in the Maryland laws of the period were not disregarded even in the beginnings of the city, and so notices are found, calling a muster "of the members comprising the Washington artillery at the parade ground on the President's Square . . . the members to be in complete uniform." [2]

This militia company, probably the first in the city, was called upon to give dignity to a popular demonstration in honor of General Washington, who had just retired from the chief office in the gift of the nation, as he passed through the city on his way to his home at Mount Vernon. The artillery company in command of its captain, James Hoban, met the ex-president

[1] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 224.

[2] *Washington Gazette*, Nov. 9, 1796. Benjamin Ogle Tayloe, "In Memoriam," p. 150, Washington, 1872, states that in the early years the militia musters were held in Lafayette Square. Originally that space formed a part of what was known as the President's Square.

when he reached the capitol and saluted him with a discharge of cannon. General Washington probably went to the home of Thomas Law on New Jersey Avenue, where he dined, and was then "escorted to Georgetown by several of our most respectable citizens. As he passed the president's house a salute of sixteen guns was fired by the said company." [1]

Further evidence of the progress of the city is to be found in the compliance at this time with one of the terms under which the owners of the land comprised within the bounds of the city parted with their holdings. It was stipulated by the deeds executed in 1791 that if the arrangement of the streets permitted, the proprietors were to retain their houses and buildings and graveyards by the payment of half the amount the United States had agreed to pay for land reserved for public uses. In the event it was necessary to remove these buildings then the owners were to be paid their reasonable value.[2] In accordance with these provisions the commissioners directed the land thus improved be deeded to the proprietors. At this time such action was taken in the case of ten proprietors, and with one exception the entire square where the buildings were located was deeded and in some instances more than one square.[3]

[1] *Washington Gazette*, March 15, 1797.

In the issue of Oct. 13 are notices for the battalions comprising the 18th Regiment "to meet at the old fields near Mr. Carrolls" and for the Georgetown Troop of Horse "to meet at the parade ground near Mr. Dorseys."

[2] American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 221. Copy of a deed of trust for land in the city of Washington.

[3] The list is as follows: Notley Young's buildings, together with Squares 329, 355, 356, 389, 390, 391, 415, S. of 415 and 439, S.W.; Comfort Sands and Dominick Lynch, Square 449, L and M, 6th and 7th streets, N. W.; Wm. Prout, Squares 906 and 907, between 11th and 12th, B and C streets, N. E.; Ruth Ann Young, Square 1106, 17th and 18th and H streets and Eastern Branch, S. E.; Abraham Young, one-half of Square 1053 and Square 1054, 14th, 15th, C and E streets, N. E.; David Burnes, Square 375, 9th and 10th, G and H streets, N. W.; George Walker, Square 862, D, E, 6th and 7th streets, N. E.; John Davidson, Square 284, 12th, 13th, K and L streets, N. W.; James M. Lingan, four lots in Square 139 between M, N and 19th streets, and Connecticut Avenue, N. W.; Daniel Carroll, Square 736, between 1st, 2d, E and F streets, S. E.

The method adopted, at least in one instance, in clearing from the ground the trees which contemporary accounts agree covered a great part of it, is indicated by an advertisement that "all the wood standing on 150 acres of land in the city of Washington near the Little Hotel and belonging to Messrs. Comfort and Sands," is for sale.[1]

An early notice of an association of mechanics, probably it was not a labor organization but a fraternal and benevolent association, is found in the *Gazette* of Dec. 23, 1796, where "the members of the Carpenters Society are requested to attend at Mr. Vaughan's tavern."

Early in the year 1797 the affairs of Messrs. Morris and Nicholson had reached such an acute stage that a large quantity of their paper was advertised to be sold at public sale at Georgetown.[2] It is presumed, this was a portion of the notes given in the purchase of lots from individuals, and while in that case the transaction did not affect the commissioners, yet they had an abundance of troubles of their own, arising from the same source. There was first of all a controversy with Thomas Law, who demanded from the commissioners a fee simple title to lots he had bought from Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf, free from the provision of the agreement made on behalf of the public with these gentlemen that in the event of their making a sale of any of the lots prior to Jan. 1, 1796, a house must be built on every third lot. But the commissioners maintained that the only security they had to enforce the building requirement on individual purchasers was the insertion of such a condition in the deed.

As for the thousand lots deeded to Morris and Nicholson to enable them to obtain a loan, they argued that the building condition as well as the payment for the lots was secured by

It may be added that while these properties are classed as the homes of the original proprietors the latter term is used to designate the owners at the time when the division of the land was made and therefore in all instances, they were not those who owned or occupied the land when the site of the city was chosen.

[1] *Washington Gazette*, Nov. 30, 1796.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Jan. 27, 1797.

the bond of the syndicate. This contention of the city authorities was upheld by the attorney-general. But it was only the beginning of a course of events that had its origin in the change in the policy of the original agreement with the three principal purchasers; namely, relaxing the requirement of either cash in transactions, or else the security of the land itself. Certificates were issued to Morris and Nicholson for lots and they were in turn used by them as security and transferred to others, so that important questions arose when the certificates or script, as they were termed, were presented by third parties in exchange for deeds.

It was in February, 1797, that the commissioners began the second sale of the property of delinquents, the first having been held in the previous October, to enforce the terms of the contract of sale against such purchasers. In this specific instance, the proceedings of the commissioners show that out of fourteen lots offered for sale six were bought in — a side light on the market for Washington realty that reveals the condition better than mere statements. As it was only expected on such occasions to realize from the sales the amounts due to the commissioners and as even under such circumstances the demand was slight, the situation was not of promising character.

At this time Samuel Davidson, who became the purchaser of ground which included a portion of the President's Square, and the section now known as Lafayette Square, and as the owner of such land came into the original agreement of cession, made his first protest against the plan of the city as it was then being carried out, alleging that it differed materially from L'Enfant's plan, which he asserted was the one on which the agreement of the original landowners was based. Mr. Davidson's motive was attributed by the commissioners, who rejected his claim, to his desire to add to his holdings in the vicinity of the President's Square.[1]

[1] Report to the house of representatives on the disputes between the commissioners and persons who conceive themselves injured by alterations made in the plan of the city. 7th Cong., 1st Sess., No. 157, April 8, 1802. American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 330. Mr. Davidson appealed to Washington, and then with others

The previous fall the commissioners were drawn into a newspaper controversy with George Walker, a property holder in the eastern section of the city, who branched off from a grievance of his own into a general arraignment of the management of the city affairs. The charges were made with boldness and the replies of the commissioners were spirited.[1]

In addition to the advertised sale of the notes of Morris and Greenleaf, another symptom of the financial condition of the big operators in city property is to be found in "a caution," signed John Nicholson, to prospective purchasers of shares in the North American Land Company, offered by the assignees of James Greenleaf, as Nicholson asserted these shares were his property.[2] It may be noted that this sale was to be held in Clement Sewall's Tavern in Georgetown, where the Morris notes were also advertised to be sold, and it may be concluded from the open war that was soon proclaimed between Nicholson and Greenleaf, with Morris fruitlessly taking the part of peacemaker, but then as always the friend of Nicholson, there was some motive in bringing to the Georgetown market the shares in the company that had been formed as one method of financing the extensive land purchases in various portions of the country made by Morris and Nicholson. But events of this general character followed each other rapidly, and some ten days later Greenleaf cautioned the commissioners against making further conveyances of lots to Morris and Nicholson without his consent, for, as it will be recalled, he sold out his interest in the Washington venture to his two associates and received in payment their paper.

In the meantime Nicholson and Greenleaf followed up their respective "cautions," with an acrimonious and personal newspaper controversy.[3]

to President Adams and again to President Jefferson, and finally the matter was brought to the attention of congress, but in no instance was the desired result attained.

[1] The entire correspondence appeared in the *Washington Gazette*, Nov. 19, 23, 26–30, 1796.

[2] *Washington Gazette*, March 11, 1797.

[3] The columns of the *Washington Gazette* were the medium and the discussion reversed the dictum of Matthew Arnold of light without

On the last day of May an advertisement was inserted in the newspapers offering for sale a long list of lots belonging to Morris and Nicholson, to be sold in default of the payment of the third instalment of the purchase money. The sale was not to be held until the early part of August, but a few weeks later, on the 26th of June, 1797, the final crash of the great speculative structure came in an assignment by Morris and Nicholson of their property interests in the new city to the trustees of what came to be known as "the aggregate fund, Henry Pratt and others, trustees." In this assignment the interests of Mr. Greenleaf were also included.[1] By October Greenleaf was in a debtor's prison in Philadelphia, where Morris and Nicholson, after maintaining a siege of several months in their houses against a host of constables who were trying to serve processes, joined him. Greenleaf in the course of a year managed through bankruptcy proceedings to get a release from the debtor's prison, but Nicholson died in prison in December, 1800, and Morris, after a prison experience of three and a half years, regained his liberty in August, 1801.[2]

The inevitable result of such a financial collapse, endless litigation, clouding the titles to property and depreciating it in the confidence of the public was felt in the new city for many a year, as fully half a century passed before the legal complications were untangled.[3] But at the outset it was felt

heat. Just how the two belabored each other can be seen in the *Gazette* issues of March 11 and 30 and various dates through April 26, 1797.

[1] Formal notice signed by the trustees that they "having accepted assignments from Messrs. Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf of all their and each of their rights, legal and equitable, in the city of Washington, etc." *Centinel of Liberty*, Oct. 13, 1797.

[2] Greenleaf was made attorney in fact of the aggregate fund by Pratt and other trustees Jan. 18, 1804 and April 8, 1805. The first suit growing out of the syndicate affairs was filed in the circuit court of the District, March 24, 1801, the day after the organization of the court. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, pp. 184–185.

[3] The records of the various cases are to be found in the clerk's office of the supreme court of the District and in the clerk's office of the United States Supreme Court. In the case of Mr. Law the record is found in Pratt *vs.* Law, while the affairs of the syndicate are detailed in the cases of Pratt and others against various individuals.

that the property would be sufficient to meet the claims of creditors of the three insolvents. This was the view evidently of the trustees of Morris and Nicholson, for they at once sent a draft to the commissioners in part payment of the instalment of the purchase money due and the sale of the property was discontinued by the commissioners in the expectation that the money would be forthcoming for the balance. At this time William H. Dorsey, a resident of Georgetown and a considerable owner of property, was the representative of the trustees. The commissioners, however, announced if the payments were not made, they would resell the property in accordance with the provisions of the Maryland law, and in this decision they were upheld by the opinion of the attorney-general.

But while this last recourse was deferred for a time in the case of the syndicate, the sale of lots of other delinquent purchasers was continued daily for about two weeks.[1] In a number of instances at these sales no bid was received at all for some of the lots offered and they were added to the list of lots prepared for the next day's sale.

As there was no market for the city property and no money realized from the efforts made to place a loan in Holland the commissioners, towards the close of the year 1797, in order to provide funds for beginning the work of the new season, as well as to secure a supply of building material, again applied to the legislature of Maryland for another loan of $100,000, under the provisions of the act of congress. The request was granted, and United States six per cent stock of the par value of $100,000 was secured, but as the market price of the stock had but slightly improved, the amount realized was about eighty-four cents on the dollar.[2]

Before the year 1797 closed, a change of consequence was made in the corps of surveyors employed by the city. Wash-

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Oct. 18–Nov. 2, 1797.

[2] The net proceeds of the two Maryland loans aggregating $200,000 was $169,873. Report of Commissioners, Jan. 28, 1801. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 220.

ington Boyd, who had been in the surveying department since April 15, 1794, was placed in charge of the books and papers in the surveyor's office heretofore under the care of James R. Dermott, who was discharged. The resignation of Nicholas King, who came to this country from England in the spring of 1796, was accepted, to take effect Sept. 12, 1797. On the latter date he was succeeded by his father, Robert King, Sr., who had just arrived in this country from England. He was accompanied by another son, Robert King, Jr., who later on entered the service of the city in the surveying department.[1]

Nicholas King gave up his public office in order to devote his time to private work. He was employed by Robert Peter and also Morris and Nicholson to look after their land business. It is probable he was the founder of the first library in the

[1] A list of the principal men employed in the surveying department of the city from the beginning, taken from a manuscript list prepared by Captain John Stewart, for many years in charge of the city records in the office of the commissioner of public buildings and grounds, is as follows: Andrew Ellicott, Feb. 4, 1791 to July 19, 1793; Peter Charles L'Enfant, March 7, 1791 to March 6, 1792; Benjamin Ellicott, April 4, 1791 to Jan. 28, 1794; Ignatius Fenwick, Oct. 21, 1791 to Jan. 10, 1792; Richard Johns, Oct. 21, 1791 to July 4, 1792; Thomas Ormes, —— to Feb. 16, 1792; Jas. R. Dermott, March 4, 1792, to Jan. 3, 1798; Bennett Fenwick, Dec. —— to Sept. 20, 1793; Isaac Briggs, June 6, 1792 to Oct. 22, 1793; Thomas Curtis, June 6, 1792 to Oct. 21, 1793; George Fenwick, Aug. 3, 1792 to Nov. 30, 1793; Joseph Ellicott, Jan. 1, 1792 to Jan. 25, 1794; Alexander Ralston, June 17, 1793 to Oct. 15, 1796; Thomas Freeman, March 25, 1794 to July 7, 1796; Washington Boyd, April 15, 1794 to May 1, 1798; James Blois, June 1, 1794 to Jan. 2, 1795; Nicholas King, Sept. 24, 1796 to Sept. 12, 1797; Robert King, Sr., Sept. 12, 1797 to Aug. 13, 1802; Robert King, Jr., Aug. 21, 1800 to Aug. 13, 1801.

The office of surveyor of the city was created by the law of March 3, 1803, and the duties were defined by the law of Jan. 12, 1809. The list of surveyors appointed by the superintendent of the city is as follows: Nicholas King, June 1, 1803 to May, 1812; Robert King, Jr., May 21, 1813 to March 14, 1815; Benjamin H. Latrobe and Robert King, Sept. 5, 1815.

Robert King, Sr., returned to England shortly after his work in the city ended and he died there. His two sons and a daughter, Jane King, remained in the city. The latter married John Lenthal and their daughter Elizabeth married William J. Stone. Mrs. Elizabeth J. Stone. Sketch by Helen W. Burnside. Washington, 1893.

city, as he is mentioned as librarian of the Washington Library in a notice in January, 1797, to subscribers that their half year subscriptions were due.[1] As he had been in the city at that date less than a year, it may be concluded, if he was the organizer of the library that it was started some time in August, 1796. On Jan. 17, 1798, the Virginia legislature granted a charter to the Library Company in the town of Alexandria and by an act of the following year the name was changed to the Alexandria Library Company. It may be inferred from the language of the preamble of this Virginia law the library had been in existence some time prior to this enactment.

Two years before the opening of the Washington Library, the Columbian Library had been established in Georgetown, taking its name from the Columbian Academy, and it might also be surmised its initiative from the public spirit of the founder of the academy, Rev. Stephen Bloomer Balch.[2]

The location of the library in Georgetown, at the Columbian Academy, identifies this pioneer collection of books for general uses with one of the earliest educational institutions in the District, as the latter is said to have been founded by Rev. Mr. Balch shortly after he came to Georgetown, in the year 1782. It was probably this school which was continued by John Richmond, who in the spring of 1797 announced the opening of a school, "in the lower part of Scotch Row at Mr. Balch's, Georgetown," 32d Street, south of M Street,[3] and a few months later made known his intention of opening a night school in the same place.[4] The previous December, Rev. Alexander T. McCormick, "successor to the Rev. George Ralph," gave notice that he was prepared to receive day scholars "and a few boarders," and that he can be found at "the President's Square near the Little Hotel." [5]

[1] *Washington Gazette*, Jan. 18, 1797.

[2] *National Intelligencer*, July 8, 1801. Notice of the Columbian Library, "established seven years ago in the Columbian Academy."

[3] *Washington Gazette*, March 27, 1797.

[4] The same, Nov. 17, 1797.

[5] The same, Dec. 14, 1796.

Mr. Ralph had become the principal of the Charlotte Hall School in St. Mary's County, Maryland, and Mr. McCormick succeeded him as rector of Christ Church, as well as principal of the school. When the school was opened under the direction of Mr. McCormick it was in a building near the capitol. There is no record of another school in the city at that period.

It is quite evident that the state of the real estate market, due no doubt in part to the collapse of the syndicate and its influence upon the public expenditures as well as the extremes to which speculation in city lots had gone, was beginning to be felt at this time. The writer of a communication in the *Gazette*[1] speaks of the lack of confidence in the future of the city which he attributes "largely to a doubt of the wisdom of the management of the city funds. The enthusiastic spirit," the writer adds, "in which the operations of the city commenced, opened a wide field for speculation which has been practised in all its various forms and has terminated in the ruin of all those who were drawn into its vortex, whose capital and talents were inferior to others." The Duke de Liancourt, as it will be recalled, attributes the falling off in the business of Georgetown to the diversion of the capital that was needed to carry it on to speculation in city lots. However, the editor of the paper had personal reasons for sympathizing with the estimate of city affairs made by his correspondent, for a few weeks later on[2] he informed his readers, "that the *Washington Gazette* will not be published again until the publication is attended with some profit to the publisher . . . nothing but the want of money stops the paper." After the heat of summer had passed the editor felt encouraged to try his fortunes again, and so on the 16th of September, his paper once more appeared, but as a weekly instead of a semi-weekly. In characteristic vein he addresses the public in the first issue as follows: "The *Washington Gazette* again makes its appearance and the editor hopes to receive that encouragement from the public which will enable him to continue the publication uninterrupted until he

[1] June 3, 1797.

[2] *Washington Gazette*, July 26, 1797 and Sept. 16, 1797.

shall be able from experience to sing of mercy as well as of judgment." But in scarcely six months his valedictory, brief though touching, appeared in the issue of March 24, 1798. "I shall not be able," he writes, "to continue the publication of the *Washington Gazette*, except some friend lend a helping hand. Hope has led me into a thicket of difficulties and appears to be departing from me."

In Alexandria the patronage given to a newspaper at this period was on a more liberal scale than in Washington or was the editor of the *Washington Gazette* of too mischievous and combative turn of mind to secure for his paper the available patronage. Certainly as it was made the vehicle of the sarcasm and perhaps to some degree the ill nature of George Walker against the city authorities and was rather free in comments on local affairs, some color is given to such a conclusion.[1]

There were, however, more people and more business in Alexandria, and even with a more conservative policy, the *Gazette* could hardly have enjoyed the measure of prosperity of the *Alexandria Times*, which was enabled to blossom out as a daily, in the spring of 1797. It had the further distinction of being the first daily published in the territory of the District, and as it proved, several years elapsed before a second attempt was made.[2]

[1] It may be concluded from the following advertisement that the Benjamin More mentioned was the editor of the *Gazette* who returned to his old occupation of a retail merchant.

"Benjamin More, New Jersey Avenue, City of Washington, has for sale salmon, Boston Bay mackerel, playing cards, apples, and vinegar, cheese and groceries, crockery, etc." *Centinel of Liberty*, Dec. 31, 1799.

[2] The *Times and Alexandria Advertiser* began its career in 1792 as a tri-weekly, and on the 10th of May, 1797, began daily issues. Harvard Library, Nov. 11, 1797 (Vol. 1, No. 186) to Jan. 8, 1798 (Vol. 1, No. 275). In the issue of April 10, 1798, the occurrence of the first anniversary of the daily is mentioned, and thanks are returned to its patrons "by whose assistance we have effected so expensive and hazardous undertaking as the establishment of a daily newspaper in this place." At that time the *Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette*, which began in 1792, was still published and as a tri-weekly. Henry Gird, Jr., editor.

In spite of hard times the people did not forego that popular sport, horse racing, which began as early as 1769 in Georgetown.[1]

In the spring of 1797, a great race was run on the course just west of the President's Square, four mile heats for 500 guineas, between horses owned by Charles Ridgeley and John Tayloe, a contest between the states of Maryland and Virginia which was won by the Virginia horse, owned by Mr. Tayloe. At the west end of what is now Lafayette Park was an oval-shaped course which crossed Pennsylvania Avenue, at 17th Street, and also at 20th Street, the judges' stand being about on the line of F Street, between 17th and 18th streets, N. W.[2]

In the fall of the same year another racing exhibition was given at the race ground near "the Eastern Branch Hotel."[3]

There were, however, some phases in the development of the city which gave promise of what seemed a bright future. As, for example, the announcement in the *Gazette* under date of April 22, 1797, that "last week sailed from Barry's wharf, Eastern Branch Harbor, the ship Maryland, burthen nearly 400 tons, laden with bread and flour bound to Ionic ports for the benefit of the owners.

"The above ship is noticed as the first which has sailed from the city of Washington full and bound to a foreign port." In the immediate vicinity of the wharf the walls of the sugar making establishment were rising, and its backer, Thomas Law, no doubt saw in his fancy a whole fleet of vessels on the Eastern Branch to be laden with articles for the markets of the world.[4]

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. XI, p. 164.

[2] In Memoriam. Benjamin Ogle Tayloe. Washington, 1872, p. 152. *Centinel of Liberty*, April 4, 1797.

[3] *Washington Gazette*, Oct. 21, 1797.

[4] "On Thursday last arrived the sloop *Eliza* from Baltimore with sugar, etc., for the new refinery lately built in this city by Mr. James Piercy." The *Centinel*, March 2, 1798. In the *Alexandria Times and Advertiser* of April 10, 1798, is an announcement signed by Mr. Piercy that in the course of a few days he will have ready for delivery at his sugar house a large quantity of loaf and lump sugar. He speaks of himself as having owned for a number of years one of the first and largest refineries in London. He offered to take flour in exchange for

A week later a daily boat line was established from Barry's wharf to Alexandria.[1] It was in the summer of 1797, the third epidemic of yellow fever since Philadelphia had become the seat of the new government broke out in that city. But unlike the experience during the visitations of this scourge in 1793 and 1795, a panic seized the people and there was a general exodus from the city. Even some of the places of business were moved to other towns. The public offices in the city were removed to near-by places. The war office was located at the Falls of the Schuylkill, the treasury at Grays, the state department at Trenton, while the post-office was quartered in a stable outside the limits of the city.[2]

The yellow fever also raged in Baltimore, and the conditions prevailing in those places led to offers on the part of humane citizens of Washington of rooms free of rent for the use of families thus driven from their homes. The editor of the *Gazette*, in commenting on this phase of the situation, stated that "as there are a number of buildings in the city at present unoccupied such example is worthy of imitation."[3] This lead to a communication signed "a citizen," suggesting by means "of a public meeting or otherwise a coöperation of the commissioners, proprietors, monied men and every man who feels himself interested, to get the city in such a condition that the Congress can meet here early in November."[4] There is no record of further action, as no doubt it was realized that it would be impracticable with the limited means at hand to be prepared for the coming of congress at such an early date.

sugar, intending to send it to Havanna on the vessels that came to the Eastern Branch laden with sugar cane.

[1] *Washington Gazette*, May 6, 1797.

[2] History of the People of the United States. J. B. McMaster, Vol. 2, p. 349. In the summer of 1799, during a similar outbreak, all of the executive departments were removed to Trenton, N.J., and the extra expenses incurred, including the additional outlay on the part of the government employees, were reimbursed in the appropriation bill approved May 7, 1800.

[3] Sept. 30, 1797.

[4] *Washington Gazette*, Oct. 14, 1797.

At this time the only public buildings in course of construction were the capitol and the president's house. Early in the year plans prepared by George Hadfield had been sent to the president for his approval of two buildings to be located on each side of the president's house "appearing as wings" of that building, one for the treasury department, and the other for the state, navy and post-office departments.[1]

The location of these buildings along the extension of the south line of the president's house was finally determined by the president when he stopped in the city on his way north from Mount Vernon, the latter part of October, 1796. While the vicinity of the president's house was mentioned by the president as early as 1791, in the course of his conference with the landowners, as the place he designed for the buildings for the executive departments, yet, some years later a difference of recollection was brought out as to what was said on that occasion and on that subject by President Washington.[2] It may also be noted that two of those present at the conference in 1791, who later on were confident that the vicinity of the president's house was at that early date the designated location, were both owners of property in that general section, while on the other hand, those who maintained the vicinity of the capitol was favored by the first president were interested in the eastern end of the city. Apparently the personal equation was a factor of some consequence. However, the history of those early meetings of the landholders has been fully set forth in the preceding pages, and shows that beyond doubt Washington in the year 1796 merely put into execution the opinions he expressed in the year 1791.

President Adams also differed from his predecessor on this question, holding that a location near the capitol would prove a convenience to the members of congress, while General Washington, on the other hand, from the same premises reached an

[1] Proceedings of the Commissioners, Jan. 31, 1797.

[2] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7, p. 137. Extracts are given from a report sent Feb. 6, 1818, to the house of representatives by Samuel Lane, commissioner of public buildings. Also letter of Daniel Carroll to the house committee on public buildings. March 21, 1818, 14th Cong.

opposite conclusion, as he believed that ease of access to the executive departments for members of congress resulted in interruptions and delay in the public business.

While the plans for the executive buildings had been approved by President Washington a few months before he retired from office in the year 1797, yet it was not until more than a year later that active building operations were begun. It may be concluded that this delay was due to lack of funds, for while a second loan of $100,000 had been secured from Maryland in the closing month of 1797, yet it was apparent that additional funds were needed, and so in March, 1798, Alexander White, who had been in charge of the loan bill of 1796 went to Philadelphia on a somewhat similar errand.

In April an application was made to congress for money to complete the public buildings. The house voted a loan of $200,000, which was cut in half by the senate, and in that form became a law. It is rather singular that in both houses this measure was acted upon without debate. As the law itself expresses it the amount to be loaned was "in full of the moneys which the said commissioners are now authorized to borrow," namely $300,000, and two-thirds of that had already been secured from the state of Maryland.

That the city lots had a loanable value was fully believed by the members of congress, as that was the security upon which was based the appropriation of $50,000 for the present year and $50,000 for the next year. These amounts, it was stipulated, should be reimbursed in instalments of one-fifth part, beginning in the year 1805 and annually until the whole was repaid.

While there was no discussion of the affairs of the city on the floor of the house, it is apparent from Mr. White's long and gossipy letters to his colleagues that there was an abundance of talk among the members of the committees and the legislators generally.[1] It is also evident that other interests

[1] Alexander White to the Commissioners, March 8 and 11, 1798. Commissioners' Letter Book. Also American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 481.

in the city besides the commissioners were represented in Philadelphia, "mostly savoring of the clashing interests which have caused so much discord in Washington," writes Mr. White. Some proposed, he adds with evident dismay, that a small house be erected near the capitol for the president with the executive offices in the same vicinity and some wish that house to be the permanent and others the temporary residence of the president. The plan of those that would locate the president's house near the capitol was to fit up the building then being erected for the president's house, for the use of the judiciary.

Then again there were those, according to Mr. White, who would have congress sit in the president's house, and in that event, it would not be necessary to finish the capitol. The committee was called upon to vote down amendments which proposed first the grouping of all public structures except for the judiciary about the capitol and then a similar grouping about the president's house, before the way was cleared to act upon what after all was the main proposition, aid from the national treasury. While in terms the money secured for the city by the law of April 18, 1798, was a loan and not a direct appropriation, yet in effect that is what it really was and therefore it is the first in the long list of enactments authorizing the expenditure of public funds in the city of Washington.[1]

In opposition to the proposed change in the plan of the city the commissioners advanced the argument, at a later date used by individual property holders, as to the equity of the government making a change in the uses of a public appropriation or disposing of it entirely, when property has been sold, because of its proximity to such public property. As the correspondence shows, President Adams was inclined to a plan of having the public offices near the capitol. However, as

[1] In spite of the utter failure to make any change in the location of the public buildings, another effort was made in January, 1803, and the house appointed a committee to consider the expediency of concentrating the buildings, which, however, only resulted in a report against any change and for the time the matter rested. Report of Committee, Feb. 13, 1803. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 344.

stated, none of the notions about the location of the public buildings found its way into the act which became a law and subsequently President Adams gave his approval to the execution by the commissioners of the plans already begun.[1]

[1] American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 484.

# CHAPTER XII

## A PERIOD OF BUILDING

The spring of 1798, two years from the time fixed upon for the removal of the government to the new city was a period of renewed activity in building operations — a time when more was done in the way of providing buildings than in the year 1794, when Greenleaf started the movement by the expenditure of considerable sums in brick and mortar. The modern centre of such operations, the office of the building inspector, was in the early days to be found in the surveying department, where prospective builders were required to go and get what was called then the levels of their lots and also to have their plans examined to determine whether or not they conformed to the building regulations.[1] It was at this time that William Tunnicliff, the proprietor of the Eastern Branch Hotel, in connection with George Walker, began the erection of a building for a hotel on A Street, just east of the southeast corner of 1st and A streets, N. E., the adjoining corner lot being occupied in later years by the structure known as the Brick Capitol and later as the Capitol Prison.[2] As the new building was on the post road through the city and also within easy distance of the capitol building, the motive which prompted the change can be traced in the greater importance of nearness to the great highway between the north and the south rather than to a road that carried the travel between southern Maryland and the new city. The Eastern Branch Hotel was in comparison in an inferior place, while in addition it was far removed from the capitol building, which shortly was expected to become such a great centre. A year later the new structure, called the Washington City Hotel, was ready for business.

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Sept. 27, 1799.
[2] The same, May 16, 1798.

The lots at the southeast corner of 11th and G streets, N. W., and at the northwest corner of 10th and F streets, in the same square were prepared for building at the request of Peter Lenox, who was employed at the president's house as foreman and was also engaged in the lumber business. A wide frontage on the north side of Virginia Avenue, between 3d and 4th streets, S. E., was secured by Frederick May for improvement[1] while the lot at the northeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. E., was ordered to be laid off for William Lovering for erecting a building.[2] If Mr. Lovering was the principal in this enterprise and not merely the architect, he did not carry it out, as a house was built there in the latter part of 1799 by Thomas Law, who occupied it as his residence early the following year.

A few days after Mr. Lovering was granted a permit to build authority was also given to Thomas Law to make improvements at the northwest corner of New Jersey Avenue, and E Street, S. E., which was the beginning of the erection of a row of two-story houses, known as the Ten Buildings. A building permit was also given to Mr. Law for the erection of buildings at the northwest corner of South Capitol and M streets.[3] A building permit was secured in behalf of General Washington,[4] for the erection of two houses on the west side of North Capitol Street, between B and C streets. The lot, fifty-four feet, eight inches front, had just been purchased from the commissioners by General Washington for ten cents per square foot. One-third of $535.70, which was the purchase money, was paid in cash and the balance in two annual instalments without interest, the usual terms of sale of public property. The building was intended for use either as one house or two according to the plans made at the suggestion of General Washington, by Dr. William Thornton, who also superintended the building and paid all the bills. "To aid in the accommoda-

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, June 2, 1798.
[2] The same, Sept. 12, 1798.
[3] The same, Oct. 1, 1798.
[4] The same, Sept. 24, 1798.

tion of the members of the general government," the first president informed Dr. Thornton, "was my only inducement to plan these buildings. For my own convenience," he adds, "another site will be chosen, when, if ever, I am in circumstances to encourage the expense."[1] The first president was then within a few months of his death, and as far as known, he made no further reference to what seems to have been a purpose, then cherished, to have a residence in the new city.

But, as he stated, the immediate purpose of this expenditure was to add to the housing accommodations of the city, and no doubt that was also the underlying motive of a loan he had just made in connection with Thomas Law, secured by a mortgage on the hotel building that was being erected near the corner of 1st and A streets, N. E.[2]

In the middle of the block on 1st Street, between East Capitol and A streets, S. E., was the site selected by Daniel Carroll for building,[3] but he did not begin the erection of a structure there until the year 1805, when he built a hotel, which in later years was a part of what was known as Carroll Row. At this time, too, Mr. Carroll contemplated a large building scheme to cover the entire south front of the square now a part of the capitol grounds that then extended from Delaware Avenue to 1st Street, and between A and B streets, N. E., and to a large extent he carried it out during the early years of the next century.

A location that became of historic interest, at this period, passed into the hands of the man who built there a house from which was fired the only shot against the advancing forces of the British, after they left the battle-field of Bladensburg in the summer of 1814. The site in question was the lot adjoining on the west the northwest corner of Maryland Avenue

[1] Washington to Dr. Thornton, Mount Vernon, October, 1799. J. Henley Smith Papers.

[2] The mortgage, and the fact that it had been paid, was mentioned in a deed of August, 1804, by George Walker and William Tunnicliff to Pontius D. Stelle.

[3] Proceedings of Commissioners, Oct. 8, 1798.

and 2d Street, N. E. This was purchased by Robert Sewall at the sale of Jan. 29, 1799.

It is not presumed that all the buildings mentioned were erected at that time. Prospective builders were encouraged by the commissioners, who offered a reduction in the scale of prices for lots of one cent a square foot, in the event improvements were made.[1] In the summer of 1799 the foundations were laid for a building that was destined to be famous among the taverns of the city of that period. It was then that Bennet Fenwick procured the levels for the lot at the northeast corner of 15th and F streets, N. W., but the building erected there was not used for tavern purposes until sometime in the year 1801, when it was leased by William Rhodes, who since the opening of the year 1799 had kept the Little Hotel on the north side of F Street, a short distance east from 15th Street.[2]

By the fall of 1798 such progress had been made in the erection of the public buildings that the exterior of the president's house had been completed, so that the workmen were engaged "in cleaning down and painting the wall of the building and striking the scaffolds."[3] The entire roof of the capitol, that is, of course, the north wing, the only part then built, was "boarded, shingled, and painted."[4]

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, July 22, 1799.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Jan. 4, 1799.

[3] As it is commonly supposed the popular name of the president's house, the White House, is due to the painting of the walls to conceal the smoke stains after the building was burned in 1814 by the British, this quotation from Mr. Hoban's report is of value as showing that the walls were painted at the very outset. However, the name was in current use prior to the destruction of the building.

[4] Letter from the secretary of the treasury, accompanying a report from the commissioners of the city of Washington, exhibiting a view of the receipts and expenditures from May 18 to Nov. 18, 1798. This is one of the half yearly reports from the commissioners as required by the loan guarantee law of 1796. The first was for the period from May 18 to Nov. 18, 1796, and they were continued down to Nov. 18, 1801. The board went out of existence June 1, 1802, but there is no record of a report for the last six months of its administration.

The commissioners felt justified in beginning the erection of one of the proposed executive buildings. The treasury was the one selected, and by the middle of November, 1798, "the foundation of that building, which was one hundred and forty-seven feet long and fifty-seven feet six inches wide is dug out." [1] The site selected was east of and parallel with the south front of the president's house. The character of this structure reflects the state of the finances of the city. It had only two stories and an attic, and contained fifteen office rooms on each floor. Brick, the cheapest building material, was used in the walls and stone was employed sparingly. There is no picture of this pioneer department building except one, showing the east front on 15th Street, and also a crude woodcut that appeared for the first time in the *National Calendar* of 1820, published by Peter Force. A contract was made with Leonard Harbaugh to erect the building for the sum of $39,511, and to have it completed by the first of July, 1800.[2]

At the time Mr. Hadfield finished the plans for the treasury office, it was intended to erect a similar structure for the use of the other executive departments west of the president's house. However, that part of the plan was not carried out, until the following year, the contract being awarded, July 29, 1799, to Leonard Harbaugh. But when the plans of the two executive buildings had been completed some disagreement occurred over them between the commissioners and the architect, resulting in the discharge, on May 28, 1798, of Mr. Hadfield from the public employ after a service of some three years.[3]

[1] Letter from the secretary of the treasury, accompanying a report from the commissioners of the city of Washington, exhibiting a view of the receipts and expenditures from May 18 to Nov. 18, 1798.

[2] In an account of the twin department buildings erected twenty years later and published in the *Intelligencer*, Aug. 16, 1819, it is stated they are larger than the department buildings first erected, "and having the addition each of a handsome portico with free stone pillars."

[3] *City of Washington Gazette*, Feb. 6, 1819. Card signed by George Hadfield addressed to the editor. He states his discharge was due to this cause and adds that his plans approved for the public offices "have

As Hadfield subsequently asked the commissioners to investigate charges against him it is quite evident his conduct of the business did not give entire satisfaction.[1]

The newspaper controversy which was carried on between Mr. Hadfield and Redmond Purcell, a foreman of carpenters at the capitol for four years, alleging carelessness on Mr. Hadfield's part, is mainly interesting at this time because it contains the earliest charge that the plans of the capitol were not the work of Thornton. In Purcell's contribution of April 16, 1799, he states that Thornton "smuggled his name to the only drawings of sections for the capitol ever delivered at the commissioners' office, made out by another man."

General Washington, it will be recalled, spoke of the Thornton design as modified by Hallet, so as to reduce the cost, "as anybody's or nobody's design," which seems to lead to the conclusion that to Washington's mind, at that time, at any rate, the authorship of the design was doubtful. In more recent years the opinion was held by some writers on the subject that Dr. Thornton was "an English amateur," [2] that "he was not an architect." [3]

On this phase of the subject the record of the proceedings of the commissioners of April, 1799, shows that after Hadfield's discharge a request was made to Dr. Thornton by Mr. Hoban, at that time in charge of the capitol buildings, for drawings for that structure, while all through the diary of Mrs. Thornton are references to her husband being engaged in preparing detailed plans of the work to be done at the capitol, as well as to other architectural work he was engaged in at that time,

been lately duplicated and I never compensated," alluding to the office buildings known as the state and war departments erected, about the period he was writing, on the north line of the president's house and flanking it on the east and west.

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, April 9, 12, and 16, 1799. Cards signed by Hadfield and Redmond Purcell, the former addressed to the commissioners.

[2] Address of Adolf Cluss before the American Institute of Architects, Oct. 12, 1877.

[3] The Capitol and Washington. An address. John H. B. Latrobe. Baltimore, 1881.

as, for example, making the plans and superintending the building of the Octagon House at the northeast corner of New York Avenue and 18th Street, and conferring with Bishop John Carroll, relative to designing the Catholic cathedral in Baltimore, although eventually he did not undertake that commission.[1]

While Hallet and Hadfield were in charge of the capitol building, they furnished the detailed drawings in accordance with Thornton's elevations and sections as the work progressed, but during the period of some four or five years, when Hoban divided his time between that structure and the president's house, Dr. Thornton supplied what was needed in the way of detailed drawings.

The relation of Dr. Thornton as architect to the capitol building is well brought out in the course of a correspondence he had with the board of commissioners.[2] In the first letter in the series, dated Sept. 28, 1798, he declares to his colleagues that he has "been prevented by motives of delicacy from requesting your attention to a claim which I have from my drawings of the capitol of the United States, being approved by the late President of the United States and the commissioners, our predecessors, which plan, though deviated from in some respects, I restored and accommodated to my original ideas and furnished correspondent elevations and sections for the same, which have thus far been carried into execution, and as no material change is now contemplated, it is presumed the whole will be completed upon the plan now adopted."

He then explains the purpose of the letter, which was that he be allowed to make a selection of the lot offered as a premium for the accepted design in addition to the cash prize. He states he had received the latter. Then in the following spring (April 16, 1799) James Hoban, who had assumed the duties performed by Hadfield at the capitol, wrote to the commissioners, requesting that he be furnished with drawings for

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10. Mrs. Thornton's diary covers only the year 1800.

[2] J. Henley Smith Papers.

certain portions of the structure. The following day the commissioners sent a letter to Dr. Thornton, stating that the original advertisement for plans "requires that the author furnish the necessary drawings and your letter of the 17th of November, 1795, admits the principle." He is requested to state whether he will furnish the drawings as requested.

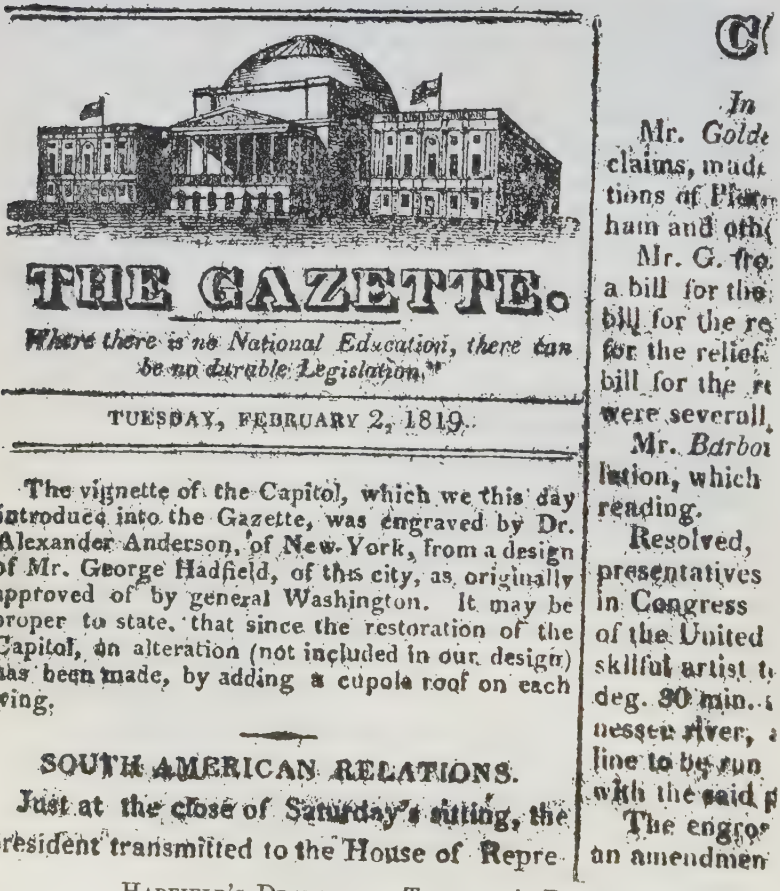
In his reply of the same date Dr. Thornton states he is willing to furnish drawings, but as the finishing of the interior is intended only to be temporary he did not suppose it was necessary. It was made a part of the duties of the late superintendent, he added, to furnish detailed drawings subject to the approval of the board, and he presumed the board considered that still a part of his duties.

It is quite evident neither the commissioners nor Dr. Thornton had any doubt as to who designed the capitol. These statements were not contradicted at the time and are corroborated by the testimony of a contemporary, who on professional grounds at least had no reason for feeling kindly towards Dr. Thornton, and that is George Hadfield. Some twenty years after his rupture with the commissioners and discharge from the public service Mr. Hadfield, who continued to reside in the city which is adorned with several examples of his correct and refined taste in architectural designing, notably the court-house of the city, was credited with being the author of the design of the capitol. The editor of the *City of Washington Gazette*[1] was responsible for this statement, which was made in the course of an article about a vignette of the capitol used to embellish a column head of that journal. In the issue of Feb. 6, 1819, appeared Mr. Hadfield's correction. He stated that the vignette used by the paper had been taken from a prospective drawing made by him. He credits Dr. Thornton, however, with the design, "except the management of the dome with an attic, which I claim as my introduction in said drawing, as believing it more consistent with good architecture, although differing from the engraving of the capitol in the city plan lately published by Mr. Robert

[1] The issue of Feb. 2, 1819.

King[1] and acknowledged to be Dr. Thornton's design of the capitol."

A comparison of the two drawings mentioned shows that



THE GAZETTE.

*Where there is no National Education, there can be no durable Legislation.*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1819.

The vignette of the Capitol, which we this day introduce into the Gazette, was engraved by Dr. Alexander Anderson, of New-York, from a design of Mr. George Hadfield, of this city, as originally approved of by general Washington. It may be proper to state, that since the restoration of the Capitol, an alteration (not included in our design) has been made, by adding a cupola roof on each wing.

SOUTH AMERICAN RELATIONS.

Just at the close of Saturday's sitting, the President transmitted to the House of Repre

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HADFIELD'S DRAWING OF THORNTON'S DESIGN.

the latter is a correct representation of the centre or old portion of the building as it exists to-day.

Mr. Hoban was placed in charge of the work at the capitol,

[1] "On Monday next will be published by W. Cooper a new and correct map of the city of Washington drawn from actual survey by Robert King, Esq., city surveyor, and engraved by C. Schwarz." *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 27, 1818. This was the second map of the city to be engraved, following the first after an interval of twenty-six years.

and in consideration of the fact that it was in addition to his duties as superintendent of the president's house he was granted extra pay. This arrangement continued while the city affairs remained under the direction of the commissioners. Using brick for the department buildings instead of stone was not the only instance of cutting down expenses furnished in the administration of city affairs.

Four or five years before, or about the time Hallet was removed as superintendent of the capitol building, the actual work was confined to the north wing, leaving the foundations of the centre portion in an unfinished state, in which they remained until the year 1803. A further tightening of the financial resources of the commissioners made it necessary in the year 1799 to stop the work on the president's house so as to make the funds on hand go far enough to get ready the capitol and the department buildings. The commissioners thought a private house could be secured for the use of the president until such a time as the building planned for his occupancy could be finished.[1] "The funds are more than sufficient for all these objects," the commissioners inform Washington, "could the debts be collected. But the impossibility of enforcing the payment of these debts in season has induced us for some time past to suspend the work on the president's house."

The rough and arduous road to be followed in the collection of debts secured on real estate in the city was fully experienced by the city officials in their attempts to enforce the payment of the instalments due from Morris and Nicholson, amounting at that time to over one hundred thousand dollars. The sale of lots for this purpose proposed in 1797, but postponed by a partial payment and promise of more from the trustees, was again attempted in the following year, but at each sale representatives of the trustees were present with their cautions and threats of lawsuits that "the public has been so alarmed as to defeat the object."[2]

[1] Letter from the commissioners to the president, Dec. 5, 1799.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, Dec. 4, 1798. Commissioners to the representatives of Prince George County in the Maryland legis-

The effort to realize on the syndicate obligations to the public was continued the following season. Sales were held three times each week for a period of some six weeks, but the net result was $41,000.[1]

Sales were held the following spring to recover the balance due and also the last instalment due in May, 1800. Although the commissioners had been advised by counsel that they had ample authority under the law to sell the property of the syndicate, yet it was evident public confidence was shaken, and so the passage of a law was asked conferring the title on purchasers in the sales already made of the Morris and Nicholson lots. This additional legislation was not secured, and while the city interest in the great purchase was in the course of latter years finally eliminated, yet for a period stretching down nearly to the middle of the nineteenth century, the voice of the trustees of Morris and Greenleaf and their attorney continued to be raised to impede the course of settlement, and court dockets were crowded with cases arising from the syndicate transactions.[2]

The commissioners in their zeal for the interests of the city felt called upon when James Greenleaf applied to the Maryland legislature for an act of insolvency, having been declared a bankrupt in Pennsylvania, to call the attention of that body to his agreement made with them. "Very few," they add, "of the 140 houses contracted by Messrs. Morris and Greenleaf have yet been erected and they with John Nicholson stand the only sureties for $80,000, the price of the 1000 lots." [3]

lature. In the records of the Chancery Court of Maryland are the papers in the suits that were entered against the commissioners by the Morris and Nicholson interests.

[1] Commissioners to the president, Sept. 25, 1799.

[2] Forty-five years after Morris and Nicholson acquired interests in Washington city property a report of the permanent committee of their creditors appeared in the *Intelligencer* (Aug. 31, 1839), which stated that Morris and Nicholson "were engaged in the purchase of lands, lots, houses, etc., to an extent which has never been equalled by individuals either in this country or in Europe. They both failed, owing more than three million each."

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book. Commissioners to the president of the senate and speaker of the house of delegates of Maryland. Oct. 30, 1798.

The name of Greenleaf was included in a list of other insolvents seeking the benefits of the bankruptcy law of Maryland in a statute enacted by the Maryland legislature in 1798. The following year he availed himself of the law, and William Cranch was appointed trustee.[1] Thomas Law, the largest individual purchaser from the syndicate, took in exchange for his money a mortgage on its property. But he was able to uphold his rights only by a course of litigation lasting fifteen years, including an appeal to the United States Supreme Court, as the voluminous papers in the case of Pratt *vs.* Law attest. Then followed the suits of the Dutch money lenders, represented by Peter Godefroy and Gillis Groenveldt. Overton Carr was appointed trustee in the case of Mr. Law, and David A. Hall in the Groenveldt suit, and sales of the lots were made by the trustees. While the complications in the handling of the public property due to the bankruptcy of Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf is well brought out in the official papers, the record as to the fate of the property holders, who also were entangled in the same mesh, is meagre and unsatisfactory. To what extent the credit and standing of the three big buyers were accepted in place of cash by the individual landowners is not known.[2]

The desperate frame of mind which the largest purchasers from the syndicate, next to Mr. Law, attained, is shown by the fact that a meeting actually took place between Mr. Greenleaf and Captain William Mayne Duncanson for the purpose of fighting a duel, which, however, ended with the snapping of a cap in one of the pistols.[3]

Mr. Duncanson, however, unlike his friend Mr. Law, had neglected to secure himself in his purchase from Morris and Greenleaf by a mortgage, and so he found a portion of his

[1] Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City, p. 172.

[2] One instance will perhaps serve to illustrate the general condition. The Twenty Buildings erected by Morris and Nicholson on land engaged to be purchased from Daniel Carroll of Duddington and with bricks furnished from the same source were advertised for sale by Mr. Carroll, but no purchaser appeared. *Centinel of Liberty*, Sept. 3, 1799.

[3] The same, Jan. 15 and 22, 1799. In the issue of Feb. 22 is an account of a duel fought by General Abram Martin and Captain W. Powell in the vicinity of Georgetown.

fortune gone in the general ruin that overwhelmed the three chief adventurers. He also met reverses in his commercial undertaking with James Ray, and by the year 1800 he was obliged to leave the large house he had built at South Carolina Avenue and 6th Street, S. E., and occupy a humbler home near the foot of 13th Street, S. W.

The commissioners encountered the labor problem, but in what would be looked upon in modern days as a mild form. This is indicated by a letter written by the commissioners in the spring of 1798. It was addressed to the stone-cutters at the capitol and the president's house. The workmen were informed the commissioners have no intention of raising their wages and further that they are expected to quit the public employment at the end of the current month, "and also all the buildings you now occupy belonging to the public, as they will be wanted for other stone-cutters, whom we shall engage." This peremptory method seems to have accomplished its purpose, as the stone-cutters withdrew their demand for higher wages and remained in the public employ. As the men were without organization, this request had been made by letter signed by all those employed. A letter of similar purport was received from the carpenters which met with a prompt refusal that ended the matter.[1] As the first of the labor movements, this episode is of interest as showing the change in the relation between employer and employed.[2]

[1] During this period mechanics and laborers worked from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. When the south wing was begun the hours were from sunrise to sunset, conforming to the general practise. In addition to the dinner time, which in the summer was two hours and in the fall an hour and a half, the workmen were allowed time in the morning and the afternoon for refreshment. Journal of Latrobe, p. 128. Memorial of the masons and bricklayers employed at the capitol in 1805 asking a return to the shorter hours which Latrobe refused. There is no record of the length of time the longer working day was observed. In the History of the United States Capitol, pp. 100–101, it is stated that the wages received from 1793 to 1800 were, bricklayers $1.50 to $1.75; carpenters $1 to $1.50; stone-cutters $1.25 to $1.33; laborers 75 cents. Wages did not vary until after the war of 1812, when they were about doubled.

[2] The names appended to the letter from the stone-cutters were as follows: at the Capitol, John McDonaugh, David Watterston, An-

As the work on the capitol advanced towards completion a night watch force was established consisting of two persons. Samuel N. Smallwood in charge of the laborers at that building was directed to employ proper persons for that service. "It is expected," the commissioners inform Mr. Smallwood, that the two men "will one at a time keep guard during the whole night and toll the bell at least once every half hour." [1]

It was thought that owing to the exposure of the carpenters on the roof of the capitol during the heat of summer they should be allowed a small portion of spirits twice a day. In consequence half a pint of whiskey was allowed each carpenter each day during the hot season.[2]

The laborers, who were mainly negro slaves hired from their masters, received quite a good deal of attention at the meetings of the commissioners. On one occasion[5] the overseer was directed not to serve pork more than four days in each week until the beef in barrels was used.[3] While on another occasion the counsel of Dr. Coningham was sought, who as he was not exclusively engaged in the active practice of his profession, was probably regarded by the commissioners as having the requisite expert knowledge without prejudice to determine whether or not a bill of Dr. May's for $268.50 for half a year for attendance at the hospital was just. Last year the commissioners inform Dr. Coningham the charge was $1.20 per head per annum, "about ninety heads being employed at the public works." [4] The close of the career of another medical practi-

drew Lathead, Peter Lorimer, John Hill, Alexander Rea, Samuel Godfrey, Joseph Cochran, William Simpson, James Seller, Abraham Cook, William Beard, James Donald, George Terry, John Elford, Alexander Robertson, Robert Miller, Joshua Gallaher, Robert Spedon, David Oglevie, Andrew Rutherford.

At the president's house, Alexander Rice, Hugh Somerville, Andrew Shiels, James White, John Williams, Alexander Wilson, William Bond, James Rice, James McIntosh. Commissioners' Letter Book, April 16, 1798.

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, June 27, 1799.

[2] The same, Aug. 13, 1798.

[3] The same, April 5, 1798.

[4] Commissioners' Letter Book, Nov. 22, 1798.

tioner appears to be indicated in an advertisement of Thomas Law offering for sale the residence of Dr. John Crocker at the northeast corner of 9th and E streets, N. W., but some understanding must have been reached, as the property remained in the control of Dr. Crocker, but there is no further record of his professional activity.[1]

At this period too Dr. James H. Blake, who had been a resident of Georgetown since 1789, when he entered upon the practice of his profession announced his intention to remove from that place.[2] He removed to Colchester, Va., and becoming interested in public affairs was elected a member of the legislature. In the year 1809 he established his residence in Washington, where he practised his profession.[3]

Measures were adopted at this period to officially set apart and determine the ground selected for public uses, as President Adams in the summer of 1798 affixed his signature to a paper specifying where and what were the public appropriations, as they were called. Such a paper had been signed by General Washington in the spring of 1797 at the close of his administration, but as the Appropriation Map, as it was termed, prepared by James R. Dermott, was, through some oversight not attached, the trustees to whom the proprietors of the land had transferred their holdings, in accordance with the agreement, refused

[1] "The earliest physicians in Washington were Drs. Samuel Brown and John Crocker — the latter had been a surgeon in the revolutionary war." Anniversary oration delivered before the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, J. M. Toner, M.D., Washington, 1869, p. 6.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 19, 1799.

[3] History of the Medical Society, p. 213, Washington, 1909, and p. 219, sketches of Drs. Dick and Brown. "It is probable Dr. Walter Smith was the first physician who settled in Georgetown and Dr. John Weems was the second. Dr. Charles A. Beatty settled in Georgetown in 1782. Dr. Charles Worthington, a native of Anne Arundel County, Md., and the first president of the Medical Society, settled in Georgetown in 1783. Edward Gantt began to practise there prior to 1800. He was also a minister of the Episcopal Church." Toner's Anniversary Oration. The same authority states that prior to 1800 Drs. James Craik, Elisha Cullen Dick, James Gillies, Gustavus Brown and William Washington were practising physicians in Alexandria. Dr. Brown, who was called in at the last illness of General Washington, is mentioned as living in Port Tobacco, Md.

to execute deeds, assigning as a reason that the land thus to be appropriated was not described. This omission was corrected, and an order similar in terms to the one signed by General Washington was approved by his successor.

The trustees, however, warned by the landholders of being held responsible for the proper execution of the trust, still declined to sign deeds transferring to the government the property appropriated for streets and reservations, justifying such a course by showing a paper signed by several of the proprietors forbidding the trustees to convey and promising indemnity in case of refusal. It was alleged by the trustees that the description of the appropriations did not agree with the plan to which it referred. On the other hand, the commissioners maintained that it agreed with "the utmost precision." The advice of the attorney-general was sought by the city authorities, and they were assured the property was as effectually vested in the United States, as if it were formally conveyed.[1] This conclusion has never been reversed; in fact, it has been judicially affirmed.[2] The formal title of the United States to the land in the city devoted to streets and reservations has never been recorded, but by deed of November 30, 1796, the trustees, Thomas Beall of George, and John M. Gantt of Georgetown, conveyed to the commissioners of the city all the lands of the original proprietors "which have been laid off into squares, parcels or lots for buildings." [3]

The land set apart for public uses, and known as reservations, for which the proprietors received compensation at $66.50 per acre, amounted to 551 acres and two roods.[4] The reservations were seventeen in number, of which three having originally 339 acres comprised the grounds of the President's Square, (including Lafayette Square) and of the capitol and of the Mall to the Potomac River, the same area as exists to-day

[1] Commissioners to Committee of the House, March 23, 1802. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 333.

[2] Van Ness *vs.* Mayor of Washington. U. S. 4 Pet., 232.

[3] Liber B. F., 588–616, Land Records of the District of Columbia.

[4] Proceedings of Commissioners, Nov. 28, 1798. Report of Robert King, surveyor of the city.

except the additions made to the Mall by the reclamation of the Potomac Flats and the two squares between Missouri Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue, and 3d and 6th streets, and the two squares between Maine Avenue and Maryland Avenue, and 3d and 6th streets. These four squares were sold in accordance with an act of congress of May 7, 1822.

By the provisions of the same act three reservations of one square each, and containing eleven acres on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 2d and 4½ streets and C and B streets, N. W., known in the early days as the Bank and Exchange Squares, were sold. The other reservations — fractions of acres being omitted — were the Naval Medical School Hospital property between 23d and 25th, E Street and Potomac Park, containing nineteen acres; the War College grounds twenty-eight acres; the West Market Square, between 20th and 21st streets, B Street and the Potomac River, now a part of Potomac Park; the Centre Market Square, two acres between 7th and 9th, Pennsylvania Avenue and B streets still used for that purpose; the National Church Square, four acres between 7th and 9th, F and G streets, N. W., occupied by the Patent Office building; Judiciary Square, between Indiana and Louisiana avenues, G, 4th and 5th streets, N. W., nineteen acres; the Hospital Square, between B and G and 19th streets, and the Eastern Branch, seventy-seven acres, now for many years occupied by the city jail; the Navy Yard, M, 9th, 7th streets and the Eastern Branch, twelve acres, but since enlarged; the Eastern Branch Market and grounds (two reservations) two acres between K, L, 5th and 7th streets, S. E., now unoccupied, but still in public ownership; the Town House Square, twenty-three acres, now known as Garfield Park, South Capitol, 3d, E and H streets, S. E.

The commissioners proceeded to give notice to the owners of the land of their intention to take possession, warning them that all trees "not marked for public use," and not removed, would be considered public property at the end of six months and directing that enclosures be removed. Mr. Davidson, who owned a portion of the President's Square, including in that

designation what is now known as Lafayette Square, presented to the United States the trees standing on his property. Mr. Carroll was still raising crops on the Mall, and Mrs. David Burnes, whose husband had died[1] a few months previously, was advised that as the public must have possession of the appropriations, not to plant a crop that year. Daniel Carroll was given permission to plant crops subject to the possibility of the commissioners planting trees, which, however, with a recollection of the state of their finances, they add, is not likely.

It was in the summer of 1799 that the commissioners, in spite of the objections of Dr. Thornton, who was an upholder of the policy of executing the plan of the city and erecting the public buildings on broad, generous lines decided to divide with the property holders the triangular pieces of land formed by the cutting of the transverse avenues across the rectangular system of streets. In some cases these sections of land were only large enough for one building lot, and in other cases there were two or more. Prior to this time the commissioners had made a division of land of this character bordering on Kentucky Avenue. The owner, George Walker, declined to consider them as public appropriations and therefore subject to be paid for at the acreage price, as he claimed he had a market for them on a per foot basis.[2] The question arose at this time on the application of Samuel Blodgett, for a division of the square bounded by P, 18th, Massachusetts Avenue and Dupont Circle and the square bounded by New Hampshire Avenue, 18th and R streets, N. W. As Dr. Thornton wisely pointed out in the Walker case, these small fractions of land "if occupied by individuals might justly be considered as nuisances, yet if ap-

[1] "Died. In the city of Washington on Tuesday last (May 7), Mr. David Burnes, a very considerable proprietor of lots." *Centinel of Liberty*, May 10, 1799. This was the scant notice of a man whose name is mentioned in connection with the early history of the federal city more frequently than perhaps any other of the original proprietors, and whose daughter became known as the Heiress of Washington.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Aug. 16, 1799.

propriated to public use, they would not only be highly useful, but also ornamental, as they would serve for churches, temples, infirmaries, public academies, dispensaries, markets, public walks, fountains, statues, obelisks, etc." [1] Dr. Thornton submitted the case to General Washington, who in his reply reiterated his well-known policy since his retirement from public life "not to intermeddle in any public matter which did not immediately concern me." He, however, added that he considered the purchaser of property on an open space would have just cause for complaint if "an angle thereof should afterwards be filled up in a manner" he might not approve.[2] However, Dr. Thornton was overruled and these triangular spaces were disposed of, although there were some that fell to the public in the division of the property, and in this way they were saved for the future adornment of the city.

A project of city advancement that met the hearty approval of General Washington, and was fostered by the commissioners, was to bring about the erection of houses by foreign governments for the use of their representatives in this country, sites to be donated in Washington for that purpose. What seemed a promising beginning was made in the summer of 1798, when the Minister from Portugal, Cipriano R. Freire, visited the city and selected a building site on the President's Square fronting on the east side of 17th Street, directly south of where the state war and navy department building now stands, a situation thought by Washington to be desirable for such a purpose. President Adams in this particular, as well as in all others relating to the affairs of the city, fell in line with the policy of his predecessor and signed a deed conveying the site to the queen of Portugal. But when the attorney-general heard of the transaction, he gave it as his opinion that congress alone was competent to grant away the public property.[3]

The minister from Spain, Carlos M. De Irujo, also expressed

[1] Dr. Thornton to General Washington, May 31, 1799. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 335.

[2] The same.

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book, May 23, 1798. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 334.

his willingness to accept on behalf of his government such a grant,[1] but the lack of power on the part of the president to act resulted not only in the withdrawal of the proposed grant to the queen of Portugal, but the abandonment of the entire project.

As the time of preparation drew to a close the commissioners found that more money was needed, and as all the public lots were subject to existing loans from the United States and Maryland, a plan was devised of making available for such a purpose the lots remaining of the Morris and Nicholson contract not paid for or conveyed to them.[2] There were 1210 of such lots, and at the value fixed upon in the agreement they were worth nearly $100,000. The members of the Maryland legislature, to whom application was made in December, 1799, for a loan of $50,000 based upon this security, however, did not accept the valuation. In agreeing to make the loan, as was done by the Maryland act of Dec. 23, 1799, it was stipulated not only that the commissioners should give surety for the payment, both in their official and personal capacities, but additional security was demanded. This was furnished by Uriah Forrest and James M. Lingan giving a bond to the state of Maryland. Mr. Forrest also gave the state a mortgage on 420 acres of land.[3]

The financial situation had a new complication at this time, due to the refusal of the Bank of Columbia to continue to discount the city paper. The reasons for a change of policy upon which the bank had been founded have not been preserved, but it aroused the strong resentment of the commissioners, who discussed the removal of the city account to the Bank of Alexandria.[4] The difficulty was apparently adjusted. As a change had

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, Nov. 21, 1798.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book. Commissioners to John Adams, Sept. 25, 1799. Also to Uriah Forrest, Dec. 9, 1799.

[3] The loan as on previous occasions was United States 6 per cent stock, and from its sale the commissioners realized $42,738. Report of Commissioners, Jan. 28, 1801. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 220.

[4] Proceedings of Commissioners, May 20, 1799.

taken place a year before in the presidency of the bank, at which time Benjamin Stoddert, who had been at the head of the institution nearly the whole of its five years' career, resigned, it is probable the friction with the city authorities was due to that circumstance. At that time Mr. Stoddert had just been appointed by President Adams, secretary of the navy, the first to fill that position. He was succeeded as head of the bank by John Mason, a member of the firm of Fenwick, Mason and Company, merchants, Joseph Fenwick in charge of the business at Bordeaux, France, and Mr. Mason managing the Georgetown house.[1]

It was the first report of Mr. Stoddert to congress as head of the newly organized department of the navy that was influential in securing an appropriation on Feb. 25, 1799, of a million dollars to build six ships of war. A portion of this money was used in purchasing ground for six navy yards, the Norfolk and the Washington yards being among the number.[2]

A place for a navy yard had been provided for in the first plan of the city and had been set apart by the commissioners with the other public reservations. It was a tract of land containing twelve acres bounded by 7th, 9th and M streets and the Eastern Branch, but this area was evidently not looked upon as sufficient for the purpose, and Mr. Stoddert asked the commissioners to arrange to procure additional ground. This was accomplished by Daniel Carroll and Mr. Prout agreeing to take in exchange lots in other squares for the lots held by them in the two squares adjoining and comprising the entire area on the west of the navy yard site, and bounded by 6th and 7th and M streets and the Eastern Branch.[3]

For the two squares thus acquired the commissioners received from the United States the sum of $4000, which was probably the figure at which the land was held — the current

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, June 3, 1800, announcing the dissolution of the partnership.

[2] Navy Yard, Washington, history from the organization. Henry B. Hibben, 51st Cong., 1st Sess., Senate Ex. Docs., No. 22.

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book. Commissioners to Benjamin Stoddert, Dec. 3, 1799.

market price — so that the transaction furnishes additional evidence of the theory of that period of the entire separation of the city affairs from those of the general government.[1]

It is interesting to note that Mr. Carroll in writing to the commissioners in relation to the proposed exchange of property states that the navy yard site was originally intended for the exchange of the city.[2] A provision of land of such large area as a place for the daily meetings of merchants and shippers gives some notion of what was then thought of the future commercial importance of the city. In less than four months after the appropriation for building ships had been made William Marbury of Annapolis, Md., who had been appointed naval agent, began to advertise "for ship timber for a 74-gun ship to be built at the Navy Yard, Washington."[3] By October of 1799 a wharf was being built, and in January following Captain Thomas Tingey, "an officer of great merit in our Navy," was ordered to Washington "with a view to superintend the building of the 74-gun ship and to aid in the arrangement of the navy yard, the improvements of which he will also superintend."[4]

The development of the navy yard at first was slow.[5] By the fall of 1801 the expenditures at the Washington navy yard were largely in excess of that at the other yards, namely, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Portsmouth and Norfolk, so that several of the buildings were erected by that date. The policy of the Jefferson administration that came in on March 4, 1801, was opposed to a permanent navy and the Washington yard felt this influence.

[1] As the first purchase of land by the United States in the federal city, this transaction is of interest, but it has a further claim to attention because of what seems a curious distinction, as the two squares after the exchange with the individual owners had been made were as much public property as the original area of the navy yard.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Sept. 18, 1799.

[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, June 18, 1799.

[4] Secretary of Navy Stoddert to William Marbury, Jan. 22, 1800. Navy Yard, Washington, p. 25.

[5] "We then went to the navy yard. Much surprised to see so little done. Only six men at work." April 28, 1800. Mrs. Thornton's diary. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10.

The necessity for naval defence had been impressed upon the public mind by the damage inflicted upon American commerce by the French vessels, and as a result came the million-dollar appropriation early in 1799 for war ships and navy yards.

Some five years before, however, congress began to provide coast defences in the way of fortifications at exposed places, and especially at the approaches to the important centres. The new capital city must have ranked in that class, although at that time hardly three years had elapsed since the surveyors had determined the boundary lines of the city and the District. However Alexandria was selected as one of the places where fortifications were to be provided, and on Jones Point south of that city and commanding a wide sweep of the river "a barbette of twelve pieces of heavy cannon" was erected in the summer of 1794.[1] It was directed the parapets should be of earth or faced with strong timber and filled in with earth. Some $3000 was expended, and then in a couple of years the works were abandoned.

An armory had been established at Springfield, Mass., in the year 1793, while five years later a similar plant was started at Harper's Ferry. This latter location was convenient to the Antietam Iron Works operated by Samuel Hughes and others near Hagerstown, where many of the cannon used during the struggle with Great Britain had been made. The making of cannon for the government by the same contractors was still going on, but apparently at their plant in Cecil County in the northeastern part of Maryland.[2] A year later, however, a contract was made by the government with Henry Foxall and Robert Morris, Jr., operating the Eagle Iron Works in Philadelphia to furnish cannon. This was not the first engagement of the sort entered into by these men, but the new factor was the decision reached by the senior partner to establish a furnace near the federal city and make there the cannon he had agreed

[1] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 93 and 110.

[2] Report of Secretary of War in regard to contract with Samuel Hughes and others. American State Papers, Vol. 1, p. 123, April 12, 1798.

to supply the government by a contract dated Sept. 11, 1799, and subsequent dates. The initial step in the execution of this purpose was the purchase by Henry Foxall by deed of Dec. 4, 1800, of a tract of land owned by Francis Deakins on the Potomac River about one mile north of Georgetown. Here Mr. Foxhall erected the buildings of the Columbian Foundry, and here for a period of some fifteen years he engaged largely in the manufacture of ordnance for the government. This event occurring in the same year as that of the removal of the government to the new city must have been looked upon as confirming the expectations of those who believed that population and business as well as property values would be given a great impetus as soon as the removal was accomplished.[1]

For six years the second lottery enterprise of Blodgett had been making spasmodic efforts to reach an end, and over two years after the notice of the last drawing, came announcements in the *Centinel of Liberty* extending over a week, giving lists of prizes in the drawings. There is a suggestion of some difficulty experienced in meeting the requirements of the prize tickets in an advertisement of this period signed by Blodgett.[2] He offered for sale 150 lots in the city of Washington, and he explains "as many of the above lots form a part of the securities pledged for the payment of prizes in lottery No. 2 and are to be sold in consequence of the losses incident to the extreme credits given to further the sales of the tickets, prizes in the said lottery will be received as cash in payment for all or any part of the purchase money."

While all the city property owned by Blodgett was subject to the payment of the first prize in the first lottery, yet in the confident belief that the equity was more than ample to meet that demand, he proposed this scheme as well as another one later on to utilize what he maintained were genuine property rights.

[1] The Old Cannon foundry above Georgetown. Madison Davis. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10. Mr. Foxhall was an Englishman. His Washington enterprise was not shared in by Mr. Morris. The latter is thought to have been a son of Robert Morris.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Aug. 16, 1799.

The latest reference to a drawing of lottery No. 2 is an announcement of prizes and blanks in the *Centinel of Liberty*, June 3, 1800, the drawing having been held May 26. The situation of this enterprise is fully set forth in a statement signed by Dr. William Thornton more than a year later.[1] He justifies the acceptance by the Washington association and United States Insurance Co., one of Blodgett's projects of city lots owned by Blodgett in exchange for the stock of the company. The criticism made that this property is twice mortgaged, he explains, is not properly founded. "It is so nominally," he adds, "for the first lottery has long been paid and only one claim now in dispute is made for which ample security is given." As has already been stated in the narrative, when a few years later an attempt was made to satisfy this claim, the entire property interests of Blodgett in the city were swallowed up.

Dr. Thornton then takes up the status of lottery No. 2. "Of these tickets of the second lottery," he explains, "one-fourth only were sold, and they are so nearly redeemed by payment of the prizes and recalling the undrawn tickets that few remain to be cancelled."

The community, however, had its amusements, even though it was engaged in laying the foundations of the nation's capital. In November, 1798, the citizens of Alexandria and the neighboring places were notified that the new theatre building "designed by Captain Stephenson, architect of Washington city," was open.[2] In Georgetown Messrs. Hamelton and Co. the following spring announced the opening of "the theatre in Mrs. Suter's ball room in Union Tavern," [3] while a few months later "Messrs. Darby and Barnard from the Philadelphia theatre" informed the public that they appear "at Mr. Pollock's six buildings, City of Washington for one night only." [4] As the first theatrical performance in the city of Washington, this event is of interest. It was also given in the month of August, which for the most part

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, Sept. 7, 1801.
[2] *Alexandria Times and Advertiser*, May 17, 1798.
[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, March 15, 1799.
[4] The same, Aug. 6, 1799.

has, since that period, been the closed season for the theatrical world in this city. However, the program was not a heavy one, as it comprised "a dramatic olio, consisting of songs, jests and sentiments in three parts."

But the promoters of this enterprise were evidently only an advance of their company that played in Philadelphia during the winter and spring season and at its close came south to try its fortunes in communities where the chance to see a play at home was not frequent. Ten days later a notice signed by Wignell and Reinagle appeared "that a new theatre at Suter's Tavern will be opened in the course of the next week by the Philadelphia Co." [1] The new capital was becoming a centre of some importance as indicated by the establishment of rival stage lines between Baltimore and Georgetown. The competition for the patronage of the public resulted in a sharp cutting of rates, starting at the then low level of $2 for the trip, then reduced to $1.50 and then to $1.[2]

Another feature of community life was the provision made for burial grounds. "In consequence" the commissioners state in a newspaper advertisement [3] "of the numerous objections which have been made against burial grounds in other cities, the commissioners of the City of Washington have laid out two squares on the border of the city; namely, Square 109 (19th, 20th and S streets and Florida Avenue, N. W.) and Square 1026 (13th, 14th, H and I streets, N. E.) and have directed a portion of each to be enclosed for public burial grounds for the use of all denominations of people."

Previous to this time the cemetery of Rock Creek Church was the only place of the sort in the vicinity, and the editor of the *Gazette*, with his customary freedom of speech, had protested against a situation where it was imperative to pay for a burial lot.

There had been an increase in the number of schools, as in

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, Aug. 16, 1799.

[2] The same, Oct. 25, 1799. John Harriott in May, 1796, paid $4 on the stage from Baltimore to Georgetown. Struggles through Life, Vol. 2, p. 253. London, 1807.

[3] *Washington Gazette*, March 3, 1798.

addition to the Columbian or Georgetown Academy, under the direction of Rev. Mr. Balch, there was the Bladensburg Academy, and besides Richard Dinmore had opened a boarding school and Mrs. Phillips, "late from England," gave notice of her purpose to open a young ladies' school "above Mr. Dalton's, near Lear's Wharf." [1]

The first bookseller of which there is a record was John Marsh, whose store was on M Street next to the Union Tavern.[2]

The development of the city and its vicinity during the four years preceding the close of the century finds illustration on the statute books both of Virginia and Maryland, but more especially with the latter as the new city came within its jurisdiction. It was during this period that the rather restricted powers conferred on the corporation of Georgetown were enlarged so as to give more extended police powers, a familiar instance of one of the signs of increased population. Then too, the revenues of the town were aided by allowing a portion of the tax on the retail liquor business to remain with the town instead of being collected in full for the benefit of the treasury of Montgomery Co.[3]

Then too, the facilities of communication with the new centre were authorized to be added to by the charter granted by the Maryland assembly, Jan. 20, 1797, to enable Benjamin Stoddert, Thomas Law and John Templeman to form a company with a capital of $20,000, to be known as the Anacostia Bridge Co. for the purpose of erecting a bridge with draw over such portion of the Eastern Branch as the company "may judge most convenient and beneficial to the public." A little over a year before the legislature had granted a charter for a company to erect a bridge over the Eastern Branch at the foot of Kentucky Avenue, but these powers had not been exercised. Eventually the latter, known as the Lower Bridge, and the former, called

[1] *Alexandria Times and Advertiser*, May 28, 1798. *Centinel of Liberty*, March 8, 1799.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Dec. 24, 1799.

[3] Maryland laws, Jan. 20, 1796, Nov. 17, 1797, and Virginia laws. Dec. 12 and 13, 1796. Laws of the District of Columbia. W. A, Davis, Washington, 1831.

the Upper Bridge, and located north of the foot of East Capitol Street, were built, but some years were yet to elapse before the projectors found sufficient encouragement to proceed with these undertakings.

In January, 1798, the legislature of each state enacted a law authorizing the formation of an insurance company in Alexandria and one in Georgetown. The latter, named the Georgetown Mutual Insurance Co., was limited to taking risks on houses, goods and furniture, while the Marine Insurance Co. of Alexandria, as its name indicates, was more especially designed for the protection against loss by those who had property in vessels or in cargoes.

The incorporators of the Georgetown Co. were John Mason, Francis Deakins, James M. Lingan, Thomas Beall of George, Marsham Waring, James Dunlop and Uriah Forrest, while those named in the Virginia act were William Hartshorne, John Gill, George Taylor, Richard Conway, Robert T. Hooe, Jonah Thompson and James B. Nicholls.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE REMOVAL OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT TO THE NEW CITY

The death of General Washington, occurring within a few months of the last event of a series stretching over a period of nine years, and resulting in the creation of what has proved to be a permanent seat of government of the United States, must have had to those nearest to him in this enterprise an additional pathos. No doubt the thought occurred to many minds when the announcement was made in the middle of December, 1799, of Washington's death that if his life could have been spared a little longer and he could have seen the national government actually established at the new centre, that it would have been a source of great satisfaction. While he had been a private citizen for more than two years prior to his death and his official connection with the new city ceased at that time, yet, as has been seen, a deference to his views and to the soundness of his judgment led his successor to continue his policy as to the new city.

He had lived long enough, however, to see much of the opposition die out, and he realized the change that had taken place, when the application to congress in 1796 and again in 1798 for a guarantee loan for the city was granted with but few votes arrayed against it. This favorable condition can no doubt be attributed in part at least to the general esteem in which the first president was held as well as to the skill and judgment shown in the direction of an undertaking so beset with difficulties and so novel in its character, for never before had an attempt been made to create at legislative command a capital city of a country.

Among other marks of respect to the memory of the first president, congress at this time recommended that the people

throughout the country observe the 22d of February as a memorial day, and that they assemble and pay suitable tribute to the memory of the first president. In accordance with this recommendation a meeting of citizens of Washington was held at the Little Hotel to make arrangements, and a committee was appointed which united with a similar committee representing the Georgetown citizens in a program for a service which was held at the Presbyterian Church, the pastor Rev. Dr. Balch delivering the sermon.[1]

"A meeting was held at the Catholic chapel in Georgetown, where one of the students of Georgetown College delivered an oration, and a poem was recited by another student." [2]

In the city, as Washington was then locally spoken of, Federal Lodge of Masons No. 15 met at Tunnicliff's Hotel and then marched to Christ Church on New Jersey Avenue, where the rector, Rev. Mr. McCormick, delivered a discourse.[3]

A little more than a week before the death of General Washington, the attitude of Congress towards the new centre was again tested when at the opening of the sixth congress, President Adams, in the course of his message, called attention to the clause in the law of 1790 which directed that the sessions of that body should begin in the new city on the first Monday of December, 1800, and then added that the commissioners of the city report that the removal at that time of the seat of government to the new location will be practicable and the accommodations satisfactory.[4]

The house, in its reply to this portion of the message, stated "no obstacle, it is presumed, will exist to a compliance with the law." The further legislative course was in harmony with this disposition to carry out the provisions of the residence

[1] Diary of Mrs. Thornton, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, pp. 105 and 110.

[2] The same, p. 110.

[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, Feb. 18, 1800. The notice to the members of the lodge was signed by Benjamin More, secretary. The identity of the name with that of editor of the *Washington Gazette* at once suggests itself.

[4] Annals of Congress, Dec. 3, 1799, p. 188. Message of the President.

bill. It was not until the latter part of the following March that the subject was again taken up, and in the course of a couple of weeks the house had agreed upon a bill and sent it to the senate, and a week later the measure had been disposed of, and on the 22d of April, 1800, about a month later, was enacted into a law. The bill created but slight discussion, and that was confined to minor details.

It authorized the president to direct the various offices to be removed to Washington at any time after the close of that session, thus anticipating the time appointed for such removal by the law of 1790.

A sum not exceeding $15,000 was appropriated for providing furniture for the president's house; a sum not exceeding $9000 for furniture for the capitol and for the removal of the records and papers of the two houses; a sum not exceeding $10,000 for making footways "for the greater convenience of the members of both houses" and for "the facility of communication between the various departments." An appropriation not exceeding $5000 was made for the purchase of books for the use of congress and for fitting up a suitable apartment for containing them.

It will be noted the provision for footways is so worded as to make it clear that the expenditure was for public uses and for the convenience and facility of the government officers, and the inference is that no local or municipal purpose was to be subserved. The possible resources of the city itself, however, were to be utilized in making this improvement, and it was directed that the public lots available be made chargeable for the reimbursement of the money thus expended.

There is no question that in the minds of the framers of this law, as was the case with those who wrote the loan guarantee law, the city of Washington was not in the class of objects chargeable on the public funds. This distinction between financial and political relations of the general government and the federal district, thus made at the very outset, continued to be insisted upon for many years in congress and with no indications of disapproval by the people of the country.

While the bill providing for the removal was still before the house, an amendment was proposed and adopted allowing a quarter additional salary to each clerk in the various executive offices to cover the expense of removal. But this amendment was struck out by the senate because of the understanding that a special provision for the clerks was unnecessary, as the law of 1790 authorized the allowance of all necessary expenses, both to clerks and officers.[1]

At this time some thought was directed to the exercise by congress of its powers of exclusive legislation within the District of Columbia vested in that body by the constitution. A resolution of Henry Lee of Virginia was adopted by the house without discussion, providing for the appointment of a committee to draw up rules and regulations respecting the District of Columbia.[2]

A committee of five was appointed, but there is no record of a report having been made, and no further reference is found to the subject until the following fall, when congress convened in the District. On May 13, 1800, the day before congress adjourned, a resolution was adopted directing that the next session be held in Washington, beginning the third Monday in November, 1800.

President Adams acted with promptness, and on May 15, the day after congress adjourned, issued an order requesting the heads of departments "to make the most prudent and economical arrangements for the removal of the public offices, clerks and papers according to their own best judgment as soon as may be convenient in such manner that the public offices may be opened in the city of Washington for the despatch of business by the 15th of June."[3]

"The avowed motive for passing the act of April, 1800, for expediting the removal of the offices," declared Mr. Wolcott, the secretary of the treasury, "was, that it would stimulate the

[1] An Address to the People of the United States, etc. Oliver Wolcott, p. 19, Hartford, 1802.

[2] Annals of Congress, p. 669, April 16, 1800.

[3] Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and Adams, p. 362, Vol. 2. George Gibbs.

exertions of the citizens to make better provision for the accommodation of Congress, than could otherwise be expected. Some reliance was placed on the exertions of the executive officers, and I trust that experience proved it was well founded." [1]

The commissioners of the city evidently the first of the year felt assured that the removal would take place early in the summer and shared in the general expectation of the beneficial influence of that event upon the local real estate market.[2]

The indications of the coming change were not merely in the minds of those with whom the wish was father to the thought. Mrs. Thornton records in her diary, Feb. 16, 1800, "Mr. Law called, showed us a letter written by a member of Congress to Mr. White to know if he could procure lodgings in one house for the vice-president (Mr. Jefferson) and nine members of Congress. Mr. Law has offered one, which is not yet begun."

In the same record under date of April 18, four days before the removal bill became a law and a month before the executive order fixing the date of removal was issued, it is recorded that Mr. Meredith, presumably the treasurer of the United States, and Mr. Caldwell had arrived in the city for the purpose of renting buildings for the war and navy departments. On May 24th, according to the same authority, Mr. Claxton, the doorkeeper of the house, reached the city to ascertain the kind and quantity of furniture needed for the capitol.

No doubt there were other visitors on a similar errand during the spring of 1800. The exertions of those interested in the city were also stimulated by the inducements presented by the more established facilities of Georgetown, where as Mrs. Thornton records, "a great deal" was heard "of the impossibility of accommodating Congress in the vicinity of the Capitol. But they speak as they wish, we hope differently." [3]

An effort was made in the spring of 1800 to supply the de-

[1] An Address to the People of the United States, p. 19.

[2] Commissioners to the council of Maryland, Feb. 15, 1800. Letter Book.

[3] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, p. 93.

ficiency in buildings in the neighborhood of the capitol by erecting additional houses. It was in March that Daniel Carroll procured from Dr. Thornton plans for two houses which he and his brother erected on the east side of Delaware Avenue between B and C streets, N. E., and which remained standing until the year 1904, when the ground was cleared for the erection of the office building of the senate. A short distance to the south and west on North Capitol Street, the two houses in course of erection by General Washington were nearly completed, while on the south side of the capitol and at the northwest corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street was a large house just finished by Thomas Law for his own use, and which he took possession of in February, 1800.[1]

At that time another large house at the northeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. E., built by Mr. Law, was nearly completed.[2]

Farther to the south on New Jersey Avenue a number of houses had been erected, while in the two squares between 1st and 2d streets, on each side of East Capitol Street, seven brick houses and four frame houses had been built by the 15th of May, 1800.[3]

Perhaps the most noted name among the early tavern keepers was that of Pontius D. Stelle. He was a resident of Trenton, N.J., and was the first treasurer of that town.[4]

[1] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, p. 108. Owing to the grade of the lot, Mr. Law's house was three stories in height at the street front and five stories in the rear, and from a plan prepared by Dr. Thornton the stable was built on the rear end of the lot and the whole yard covered over to the height of one story, the gravelled roof forming a terrace from the kitchen to the end of the lot.

[2] The same, p. 107. In an advertisement in the *Intelligencer*, Oct. 31, 1800, Robert W. Peacock informs the public that he has taken two houses in Square 690, New Jersey Avenue, opposite the house at present occupied by Thomas Law. The houses, he adds, were finished last spring. The corner house was torn down in the year 1905 when the square was cleared and the house office building erected.

[3] Enumeration by squares of houses in Washington. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 256.

[4] The life and times of Pontius D. Stelle. Maud B. Morris. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7.

About the year 1800 he came to Washington, and began there a career as tavern keeper which lasted some twelve years. It is presumed the location of the first hotel under his management was on New Jersey Avenue, south of the capitol, and while he occupied several different buildings, he did not leave the vicinity of the capitol. He was at the beginning the only rival of William Tunnicliff for the patronage that was to be found in that locality.

The sectional spirit in the eastern and western portions of the city may be traced in the dancing assemblies or balls that were given during the winter both at the Little Hotel and at Tunnicliff's. Mrs. Thornton records in her diary that at one of these gatherings at the latter place, thirty ladies were present. The usual birthnight ball was of course omitted, as congress had appointed that day for the services in memory of General Washington. The second ball was arranged to be held at Tunnicliff's on Feb. 17, which Mrs. Thornton disapproved of because it was "so near the day appointed for a day of mourning." [1]

The erection of a building that came into use as a rival tavern to the Little Hotel on F Street, was begun by William Lovell in June, 1800, in the square to the south. It was located on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th and 15th streets, and adjoining the alley on the west.[2]

The place was known as the Union Tavern and Washington Hotel, and also as Lovell's Tavern. A near-by hostelry came into existence about this time, as Lewis Morin of Baltimore in May, 1800, bought from the commissioners a lot at the southwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th Street, where he erected a two-story frame house. A contract was made by the commissioners for the erection of a stable on the southeast corner of 14th and G streets, N. W., for the use of the president. A protest was made by Mr. White on the ground that a building

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, p. 106.

[2] The site is now occupied by the buildings 1417 and 1423 Pennsylvania Avenue which were erected in the spring of 1902 and of 1913.

for such a purpose would be objectionable to the residents and injurious to property. A more convenient location, he thought, would be on the President's Square. However, the building was erected, but evidently then intended as a temporary measure until funds became available to put up a more suitable structure on the President's Square.[1]

The greatest number of buildings between the capitol and the president's house were to be found on F Street between 13th and 15th streets, while three squares to the east of 13th Street, were two of the three church buildings of the city. On this street also was the home of Dr. Thornton, while on the lot adjoining his house on the west John Templeman, the Georgetown merchant, began the erection of a house so as to have it ready by the time congress met in the city.[2] On the north side of F Street, between 13th and 14th streets, the city post-office had been located since Jan. 30, 1799. At that time Lund Washington, Jr., was found to be short in his accounts, due to intemperate habits, and had been dismissed. In his place, Thomas Munroe, the clerk of the commissioners, had been appointed. His first official act was to remove the office to that locality from Square 728, East Capitol and 1st streets, which elicited a vigorous protest from Daniel Carroll and other residents of the eastern section. The postmaster-general, to whom they appealed, was of the opinion that the location chosen by Mr. Munroe was as central as could be found, as "in the present scattered population of the city no spot can be fixed on which would not be extremely remote from and inconvenient to a few other inhabitants."[3] Mr. Habersham added that he had taken some pains to be informed on the subject and was of the opinion that "Blodgett's Hotel would be the most central spot for the office as respects the present population. I cannot, therefore, think that Square No. 253 is an inconvenient situation."

The duties of postmaster did not prevent Mr. Munroe from

[1] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, p. 155.

[2] The same, Jan. 11, 1800, p. 93. Now known as 1333–35 F Street.

[3] J. Habersham to Daniel Carroll and others, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 6, p. 159.

continuing his service with the commissioners, nor two years later, when the board of commissioners was abolished and the office of superintendent of the city was created, of holding that position, which he continued to do for a period of seventeen years. He held the office of city postmaster from Jan. 30, 1799, to April 29, 1829.

The best house of that day in the city was begun in the fall of 1799, for Jan. 7, 1800, Mrs. Thornton notes, "After dinner we walked to take a look at Mr. Tayloe's house, which begins to make a handsome appearance." This was the Octagon House at the northeast corner of New York Avenue and 18th Street, which is still standing. It was built by John Tayloe, a large planter living at Mount Airy, Va., and the owner of a celebrated stable of horses.

The house was designed by Dr. Thornton, and is a much admired example of the domestic architecture of the period. Dr. Thornton owned a lot on the opposite side of New York Avenue, and he went so far as to make a plan for a house which was not built, owing, no doubt, to the lack of funds, which was a common experience in the life of a man who moved in a large orbit but one not within the range of either the making or the saving of money. Dr. Thornton too had his farm and his racing stud. As Mrs. Thornton notes: "Feb. 16, 1800. About noon the manager came down. The hay just gone and the straw will only last a month. We have twenty-three horses." As a comment on this report of the condition at their farm, Mrs. Thornton adds, "I hope we shall have more provisions this year." [1]

A centre of a good deal of the social life of the day in the little community was the house of Thomas Peter on K Street near the bridge and in the vicinity of quite a group of houses for that period. The house, which is still standing, and known as 2618 K Street, is spoken of as early as 1796 as the home of Mr. Peter, who was the son of Robert Peter of Georgetown and who married a granddaughter of Mrs.

[1] The farm was "about five miles from Georgetown on the Frederick Road." *Museum*, Dec. 28, 1801.

Washington. At this house, according to the recollections of an old resident, General Washington was a visitor.[1] In the immediate locality of the Peter home was the residence of Joshua Johnson, a brother of Thomas Johnson, who was a member of the first board of commissioners. The daughter of Joshua Johnson had been married to John Quincy Adams, son of President Adams, in London, while her father was United States consul there.[2] Mr. Johnson had just then received the appointment from President Adams of stamp collector.

As early as the 19th of May, 1800, the commissioners received word of the intention of President Adams to visit the new city, and on the 27th of that month Mr. Adams left Philadelphia in his own carriage drawn by four horses. He was accompanied by his private secretary, William Smith Shaw. Instead of taking the route along the banks of the Delaware River, and thence along the east shore of the Chesapeake to Kent, where the bay was crossed, to Annapolis, or perhaps the one more generally used, by crossing the Susquehanna River at Havre de Grasse and thence via Baltimore and Bladensburg, he chose the longer route via Lancaster and York in Pennsylvania, and thence by Frederick to Georgetown. At all the points mentioned he was the recipient of many attentions, being met and escorted by military companies and presented with addresses, as was the custom of the day. Although he had been and was then the centre of a fierce political feud, which rent the federal party in twain and had partially broken up the cabinet, and in addition was again the candidate for the presidency in the coming fall election, there is no evidence of all this in the reports of the attentions which he received. This was the case in the state of Pennsylvania, where a solid federal ticket was chosen in November, as well as in Maryland, where the electoral ticket was divided between Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, and also in Virginia, where the entire vote of the state was given to Mr. Jefferson.

[1] Early Recollections of Washington City, p. 15. Christian Hines, Washington, 1866.

[2] Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 7, p. 536.

Three days before the president reached Georgetown a meeting of citizens was held at McLaughlin's City Tavern on M Street, east of Wisconsin Avenue. Francis Deakins was made chairman, and a committee consisting of Uriah Forrest, James M. Lingan and William Hammond Dorsey was appointed to prepare an address to be presented to the president upon his arrival, expressive of the high respect entertained by the citizens for his character and gratitude for his distinguished services.

On June 3 the president was met at the District line by citizens on horseback and escorted to the Union Tavern, and a salute was fired by the military "of the city of Washington and the marines established there."[1]

The president decided to remain in Georgetown that night in order to receive an address from the citizens, which was presented next day. A brief response was made by the president, in the course of which he extended his congratulations to the inhabitants of the town on the removal of the seat of government to the city so near to their town. He expressed the hope that "all the reluctance which remained against the change will soon be removed."[2]

The afternoon of June 4 the president continued his journey and passed over the Rock Creek Bridge at K Street into the new city. He stopped to inspect the house which was being prepared for his use and also visited the treasury building, and then went on to Tunnicliff's Hotel, where he stayed while in the city.

A meeting of citizens of Washington had also been held to arrange for a formal reception, and Tristam Dalton had been

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, June 6, 1800. Under date of March 25, 1800, Colonel W. W. Burrows, the commandant of the Marine Corps, writing to Lieutenant Thomas Barclay at Alexandria, states that "a guard has been ordered from Baltimore under the care of a sergeant and is expected to arrive at the city of Washington by March 31. You must immediately see and provide quarters for them at the navy yard." Letter Books. United States Marine Corps. As there were no buildings ready at the navy yard, the marines were stationed in Georgetown.

[2] Presidential Journey in 1800. Hugh T. Taggart, Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 193, Vol. 3.

selected to present an address. It was arranged that the presentation should be held in the capitol building. At noon the day following the president's arrival Dr. Thornton and Mr. Dalton went to the hotel and escorted the distinguished visitor to the capitol, where he received an address from Mr. Dalton and made a brief reply.

The president and his secretary dined that day at the residence of Joshua Johnson, his son's father-in-law. The dinner hour of that day was two o'clock, and at six o'clock a company was invited to tea and to meet the president. But, as Mrs. Thornton recorded, the after-dinner company did not see much of the guest of honor, as "the President did not come into the drawing-room till tea was ready and went immediately after."[1] Mrs. William Cranch, a niece of Mrs. Adams, was given a place in the president's carriage and taken home. The next day, June 6, the president was entertained at dinner at McLaughlin's City Tavern by the citizens of Georgetown, on which occasion there was a large company, and seventeen toasts were drunk. The president left the festive scene before sunset.

General Uriah Forrest entertained the president at dinner at his home in Georgetown the following day, and it was on that occasion the president explained to Dr. Thornton, who was one of the guests, that he would be unable to stop at Dr. Thornton's house as he had intended to do, to see the plans of the capitol, because he had not the time.

The following day, which was Sunday, June 8, the president dined at Thomas Peter's residence, and afterwards a large company was invited for tea. But Mrs. Thornton again records what must have been a social habit, that "the President went early in the afternoon." Instead of going to his hotel he visited Mr. Dalton.

On Monday, June 9, he left the city for Mount Vernon, to pay his respects to the widow of his predecessor. Upon his return on the 11th of June he stopped at Alexandria, where he was given a dinner by the citizens of that place, which was attended

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., p. 152, Vol. 10.

by upwards of 100 people; "more subscribed and could not get into the room."[1]

That afternoon the president left Alexandria and spent the night at McLaughlin's Tavern, and the next day went to Tunnicliff's. On the morning of June 13 he left the city, after a stay of ten days, and returned to his home in Braintree via Baltimore.

The president had the satisfaction of seeing the executive departments of the government established in the new city before he left.[2]

The first of the offices to be opened in Washington was the post-office department, on the 11th of June. In the absence at his home in Georgia of the postmaster-general, Mr. Habersham, the removal was under the direction of Abraham Bradley, Jr., the assistant postmaster-general. He arrived in the city May 30, but not finding the situation of the house selected convenient, he leased the three-story house of Dr. John Crocker at the northeast corner of 9th and E streets, N. W. But as half the floors were not laid, and only four rooms were plastered, more than a week, as well as half of the year's rent, amounting to $300, was spent before it was ready for the new uses.[3] Some notion may be gained of the volume of the governmental business of the day from Mr. Bradley's account of the disposition of the space in the building leased for its use, better perhaps than from the mere statement that the total number of employees, including the postmaster-general and the assistant, was only nine. One large room, 27 × 17 feet, he states, and two small rooms, each 15 × 14 feet, on the second floor were assigned for the department. On the first floor were two rooms which the city post-office occupied after June 20, when it was removed

[1] Thornton Diary, p. 154.

[2] "The following public offices are removed from Philadelphia. Office of the Secretary of State, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy, and General Post-Office. Letters and newspapers must in future be directed to the respective officers at the city of Washington." *Daily Advertiser*, June 11, 1800.

[3] Letters of Abraham Bradley to Joseph Habersham and also to Robert Patten. June 2 and 11, 1800. Letter Books. P. O. D. Printed in Senate Doc. No. 62, 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 1900.

from the F Street location. On the third floor were the living quarters of Mr. Bradley's family.

Yet small as the post-office department was, still Mr. Bradley states "it took us a week to prepare to move, load, etc., and it will take another week to get our things in proper order."

The other departments were relatively on no more extensive scale than the one Mr. Bradley had in charge. The treasury department was the largest, and enrolled sixty-nine persons. The furniture and records belonging to it, as they were unloaded at Lear's stone warehouse at G and 26th streets from the sailing vessels that brought them from Philadelphia, were carted to the only executive office building then completed, which was known at the outset as the treasury office. The secretary of the treasury, Oliver Wolcott, arrived in the city July 2. He found the employees of the state department, seven in number, crowded in the treasury office. But this situation was relieved by August 27, when that department was removed to one of the Six Buildings on Pennsylvania Avenue, between 21st and 22d streets.[1]

There is reason to believe the fifteen employees on the rolls of the navy office also occupied one of these buildings.[2]

On the opposite side of Pennsylvania Avenue, in a three-story house leased from Joseph Hodgson, was established the war department, with its eighteen employees.

The details of boxing and packing the property of the departments, as well as the direction of its transportation, was intrusted to Israel Whelan, who held the then recently created office of purveyor of public supplies. The total cost of this part of the removal was $15,293, while the expenses of the 131 employees paid out of the treasury aggregated $32,872.[3]

[1] The Department of State, p. 30, Washington, 1898.

[2] *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 8, 1800, a notice in an advertisement to those desiring to secure lodging to apply to William O'Neal three doors east of the navy office. Mr. O'Neal's house was located on the north side of I Street, between 20th and 21st streets.

[3] Report of the committee appointed to examine and report whether moneys drawn from the treasury have been faithfully applied, House

The originals of the itemized bills or vouchers of the various individuals for the most part are not now in existence, but in the office of the register of the treasury has been preserved the bill rendered by John Little, a clerk in that office. Mr. Little had a family of nine persons, and spent six days on the road, although the regular stage schedule between Philadelphia and Washington was at that time but two days. It cost Mr. Little $100 for the hire of a carriage for himself and family and $72 for expenses on the road for six days. He also made a charge of $30 "for board after our arrival in Washington until the house was put in repair to receive us." He also charged an item of $30 for board for himself and family in Philadelphia after the shipment of the furniture, "my official duty compelling me to remain in Philadelphia till the 1st of July in order to complete the dividends for the payment of interest." All together his bill amounted to $445.[1]

Two of Mr. Little's fellow-clerks in the register's office were paid still larger amounts, while on the other hand some of the bills were less than $100. The government paid $101.80 to defray the travelling expenses incurred by Charles Lee, the attorney-general, in removing his family of eight persons from Philadelphia to Washington, his entire bill being for $338. In this instance the removal took place in the early summer of 1799. Samuel Meredith, the treasurer of the United States, gave as one item of his expense of coming to the new city the total amounting to $516.54, "dead rent of house in Philadelphia two months $105."

Richard Harrison, auditor, was paid $373, which included the public stage charge for himself and a servant and a private carriage for Mrs. Harrison and three servants. He also included

Report, April 29, 1802. Appendix G contains the vouchers for payments made at the treasury for the removal of the officers and clerks of the several executive departments and the two houses of congress to the seat of government. This appendix, giving the name and the amount paid to each employee, and in some instances the itemized bill, is reprinted in Coll. Hist. Soc., pp. 226–241, Vol. 9.

[1] Removal of the seat of government, Senate Doc. No. 62, 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 1900.

in his account an entry of $93 for rent paid in Georgetown for a house previous to June 11, at which date he gave up his house in Philadelphia. It cost Joseph Nourse, register of the treasury, $250 for the hire of two carriages for the conveyance of Mrs. Nourse, children, five servants and himself, including the expenses on the way. He paid $300 a year rent for his house in Philadelphia, and he was reimbursed for two months and a half, or from the 1st of April when the rent for his house in Georgetown began. Mr. Nourse's total expenses amounted to $799.

The accountant for the war department, William Simmons, made a charge, as did several of the others, for the expense of coming on to Washington to procure a house, and after he and his family, eleven in number, arrived in Georgetown, he had to pay $30 to get them and the furniture to his house on the Eastern Branch, a distance which he sets down as upwards of three miles. His bill aggregated $717.

A committee of the house of representatives, which was appointed, as soon as the federal majority was succeeded by a democratic majority, to make a thorough investigation into the expenditure of the public funds by the preceding administration, reported that in its judgment the act of June, 1790, provided only for defraying the expenses incident to the removal of the offices, and that therefore the entire sum paid for the expenses of the employees was without legal authority. This construction of the law was evidently not sustained by congress, as the report was received and no further action was taken.[1]

The impressions which the city made upon the newcomers can only be partially gathered from the only two accounts which have been preserved. One is to be found in the letter written by Abraham Bradley on the 11th of June, to which reference has been made. Mr. Bradley was of the opinion that the houses were inadequate in number. He also records that the rentals asked were high. He found that provisions were plentiful and cheaper than in Philadelphia. He does not

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 9, p. 219. Also Oliver Wolcott's reply to the arguments advanced by the committee in an address to the people of the United States. Hartford, 1802.

regret the removal. "The situation of the city is beautiful and this season is extremely pleasant."

The other picture of Washington, from a contemporary pen, was written July 4 by Oliver Wolcott, the secretary of the treasury, to his wife.[1]

Mr. Wolcott was then the only representative of the Hamilton wing of the federal party who still held a seat in the cabinet. In the following November he resigned, to take effect at the first of the year, and thus he freed himself from what historians have termed a decidedly ambiguous situation. It is probable the uncertainty of his own situation gave some shade to the gloom in which he evidently viewed the new capital. He, however, regarded the situation of the city as "pleasant and indeed beautiful," and it may be said that he voiced in this respect what may be termed an impression of the city that was general in his day. He saw no other prospect for the members of congress who wished to live comfortably than to seek accommodations in Georgetown, and that is what many of them did: "There are, in fact," he adds, "but few houses at any one place and most of them small miserable huts, which present an awful contrast to the public buildings. The people are poor, and as far as I can judge, they live like fishes, by eating each other. . . .

"There are at [Greenleaf's Point] fifty or sixty spacious houses, five or six of which are occupied by negroes and vagrants, and a few more by decent-looking people, but there are no fences, gardens, nor the least appearance of business."

To Mrs. John Adams, who came to the new place for the first time Nov. 16, 1800, it was a city only in name. It is a beautiful spot, she adds, "capable of any improvement, and the more I view it the more I am delighted with it." [2]

The impression which the place made upon the mind of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith, who came to the city a bride in October, 1800, was strong enough to enable her thirty-seven years later to draw a picture that is one of the most charming of those that

[1] Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and J. Adams., Vol. 2.

[2] Letters of Mrs. Adams, pp. 432–435. C. F. Adams, 1840.

have been preserved. She lived south of the capitol, on New Jersey Avenue which, near that building, extended along the brow of the hill. Between the foot of that hill and the broad Potomac, she writes, "extended a wide plain through which the Tiber wound its way. . . . Its banks were shaded by tall and umbrageous forest trees. . . . Beautiful banks of the Tiber! delightful rambles! happy hours! . . . Not only the banks of the Tiber but those of the Potomak and Anacosta were at this period adorned with native trees and shrubs and were distinguished by as romantic scenery as any rivers in our country. Indeed the whole plain was diversified with groves and clumps of forest trees which gave it the appearance of a fine park." [1]

Within the entire area of the city comprising over six thousand acres the commissioners found on the first of May, 1800, there were 109 buildings of brick and 263 of wood.[2]

The second census of the United States, taken during the year 1800, gives the total population of the District of Columbia in Maryland, including Georgetown, as 8144. While the population of Alexandria is put down as 5171, and that of part of Fairfax County, Va., within the bounds of the District as 973. The population of the District was 14,303.

In the schedules of the enumerators which are still preserved are given the names of heads of families in the Maryland portion except Georgetown, making a total of 615. Allowing five persons to each family, the population for Washington and Washington County would be 3075, while the figures usually quoted, although their source is unknown, credit Washington City with a population of 3210, Washington County with 1941 and Georgetown with 2993. According to the same authority, which gives only the total for Alexandria and Alexandria County, the population of that part of the District was 5949.[3]

[1] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 10.

[2] An enumeration of the houses in the city of Washington made November, 1801, giving those in a habitable state May 15, 1800, and houses finished since that time. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 256.

[3] The figures given in the *Intelligencer*, Nov. 17, 1810, of the particu-

According to the official enumeration, the population of 8144 credited to Washington City, Washington County and Georgetown included 3038 white males, 2634 white females, 400 free persons and 2072 slaves.

lar apportionment of the population of Washington by the census of 1800 are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| White males | 1335 |
| White females | 1129 |
| All other free persons | 123 |
| Slaves | 623 |
| | 3210 |

In the *Intelligencer*, April 23, 1811, the returns for 1810 are also given as follows: Washington City, 8208; Georgetown, 4948; Washington County, 2315; Alexandria, 7227; Alexandria Co., 1325; Total, 24,023.

# CHAPTER XIV

## WASHINGTON AT THE TIME OF THE REMOVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT

The removal of the seat of government to a new location where nearly one million of dollars had been expended during the nine years of preparation was apparently an event that attracted but little attention. A few brief paragraphs in the Philadelphia newspapers confined to announcements about the change in the address of mail matter intended to reach the executive departments were practically all the contemporary notice given to the removal.[1]

Only indirect references are found to this important change in the record of the daily meetings of the commissioners, and in fact there is no official or formal account to be found in the public records. The letter heads of the official communications of the departments, however, show that about the middle of June the new city had become the seat of government.[2]

The newcomers arrived before all the work of preparation had been completed. They saw gangs of laborers making the first improvements since the clearing away of the forest trees on what has become the most historic street in this country, the broad stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue west of the capitol and to the west of the president's house. At that time, according to the recollections of John Cotton Smith, a representative from Connecticut who came to the city in the fall of 1800,

[1] The only direct notice that appeared in the *Centinel of Liberty*, the one newspaper then printed in the portion of the District on the east side of the Potomac, was a copy in its issue of June 3 of what had been printed in the *Philadelphia Daily Aurora* of May 28, giving the new address of the state department. It seems probable this was paid matter.

[2] Removal of the government to Washington. J. B. Osborne. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 3, p. 150.

Pennsylvania Avenue was for nearly the entire distance between these points "a deep morass covered with elder bushes which were cut through the width of the intended avenue during the then ensuing winter." He also states that a sidewalk of chips of stone from the capitol "extended but a little way." [1]

A month after the act passed authorizing an appropriation for making footways "in suitable places," the surveyor was directed by the commissioners "to stake out that part of Pennsylvania Avenue which lies between the President's Square and the capitol for the purpose of paving a footway."

A few days later contracts were made on a more ambitious scale, as they provided for "flat stone and also for laying the same so as to make a footway six feet wide from Rock Creek to the Capitol." [2] In addition to the footway, ditches were directed to be dug on each side, and the earth thus removed was to be thrown in the middle of the street, which was to be levelled, with the view of providing a top coat of gravel. Ditches were also to be dug on the side streets and carried under the footway so as to take off the water. It was also the purpose to sod on each side of the foot pavement. Some notion may be had of the then condition of this splendid thoroughfare from the public notice issued by the commissioners requesting those who have "brick yards in Pennsylvania Avenue which are in the way of the pavers and ditchers to remove them at once." Mrs. Thornton, who visited the scene of this improvement on the last day of May, 1800, states the footway is to be of common foundation stone.[3]

"Fragments of free stone" — probably the chips from the stones used in the walls of the capitol — is the phrase of the commissioners in describing the material, when later in the season, a few weeks before the arrival of congress, provision

[1] Correspondence and Miscellanies of the Hon. John Cotton Smith, New York, 1847, p. 147. Mr. Smith's account of the city was written some years after the events described. A review of this portion of the work by George Watterston appeared in the *National Intelligencer*, Aug. 26, 1847.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, May 23 and 27, 1800.

[3] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10, p. 149.

was made to continue the footway as far west as 20th Street.[1]

The section west of the president's house was six feet wide. A bridge of stone was built over the Tiber where it crossed Pennsylvania Avenue at 2d Street, and the original intention apparently was that its cost was not to be taken from the paving fund, but this was not fully realized.[2]

The mode of providing for this municipal improvement furnishes the earliest instance of that curious medley in the District of English common law, national, state, county and city laws, which owed its existence in part at least to the clause in the law of 1790 directing that the operations of the laws of Virginia and Maryland should not be affected until congress should otherwise direct. So while the city authorities were spending the congressional appropriation on Pennsylvania Avenue and several years before had spent the city funds in the preliminary clearing off of the trees, the levy court of Prince George County decided to expend some of the money raised by taxation from the citizens of the county which included the city in erecting a bridge in the city of Washington and on property the title to which was vested in the United States.[3]

However, later on in the season the commissioners made an appropriation of money from the paving fund to complete the structure, so that apparently the levy court had not secured sufficient money.

Another bridge was contracted for at this time to take the place of the structure that formerly spanned Rock Creek on a line with M Street. It was placed a short distance to the north of Pennsylvania Avenue, was built of wood, three hundred

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Oct. 20, 1800.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, October, 1800.

[3] *Centinel of Liberty*, July 22, 1800. Notice of Daniel Carroll of Duddington and Robert Brent asking proposals for erecting the Tiber bridge as authorized by the levy court. It was evidently the first expenditure in the way of improvements in the new city made by the levy court, which the writer of a communication in the *National Intelligencer* of Dec. 3, 1800, asserted, had collected a heavy annual tax from the citizens of Washington "without having expended any of it on the streets."

feet long and eighteen feet wide and twenty feet above the common level of the waters, and cost $2200. It was to provide practically for a continuation of Pennsylvania Avenue as there was a bridge at K Street. The cost was divided between two of the then existing governmental agencies, namely the commissioners of the city of Washington and the corporation of Georgetown, their joint action being justified, no doubt, by the consideration that Rock Creek was the dividing line between the two jurisdictions.

The contribution of Georgetown was supplemented by subscriptions from citizens of that place. At any rate, whatever the theory was on which this public undertaking was financed, the facts are that the "paving fund," as it was called, or the congressional appropriation for footways in the new city contributed $1000, the corporation and citizens of Georgetown $700 and the commissioners $500. The contract for building the bridge was awarded to Leonard Harbaugh, whose device for arches brought the first bridge on the line of K Street down in ruins a few years earlier, but in this instance the recognized rules for bridge building were evidently observed, as the structure stood.[1] This expenditure, as well as that for the footways on Pennsylvania Avenue intended to be made from the capitol to Georgetown, was attributed by the author of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of Dec. 3, 1800, as due to the partiality of the city authorities to Georgetown. "If there is a lack of buildings around the capitol," he explained, "it can be solely attributed to the little encouragement given." His feeling that there was favoritism shown towards the western section of the city which was especially injurious to the interests of the locality about the capitol was not appeased by the public announcement over the signature of John M. Gantt "that the record office for the territory of Columbia had been removed from Georgetown to the city of Washington, three squares east of the President's."[2]

This description leaves the first location in this city of this

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Sept. 11, 1800.
[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, May 13, 1800.

important office almost as indefinite as that of the commissioners' office or its previous site in Georgetown. The President's Square at that time included the entire grounds between 15th and 17th streets, and from H Street to the Mall, comprising what is now known as Lafayette Park. A location three squares east along Pennsylvania Avenue or F Street would be in the vicinity of 12th Street, and therefore near to the city post-office. The latter, however, on the 20th of October was removed to the building at the northeast corner of 9th and E streets, N. W., leased for the use of the post-office department.[1]

On the square east of the post-office department and in the Great Hotel building was opened August 22 the United States Theatre, the first regular place of amusement in the new city.[2] The company from the New Theatre, one of the two theatres in Philadelphia under the management of Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, remained nearly two months, giving three performances each week. As the building was unfinished and of course entirely without a stage or scenery, the initial expense must have been considerable, and besides that, Washington in the summer of 1800 did not prove to be a good field, and in consequence the enterprising managers did not repeat the experiment. A prologue written by Thomas Law, who had quite a turn for versification — occasional verses, rather than anything in a more ambitious line — was recited by Mr. Wignell; but in spite of this attraction, as well as a program of a tragedy followed by a farce in two acts, the audience on the opening night numbered but 130.[3] What was considered a full house was three hundred, and that was secured on several occasions. The doors were opened at six o'clock and the curtain rose at seven, and sometimes, as the only chronicler of the day, Mrs. Thornton, states, the performance was over about eleven o'clock, and then again it was an hour later.

The demands upon the city funds were far greater than any

[1] Post-Office moved to General Post-Office. Mrs. Thornton's Diary, Oct. 20, 1800. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Aug. 22, 1800.

[3] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, p. 183. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10. Early Theatres in Washington. A. I. Mudd. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 5.

possible response. Early in the season the final loan had been secured from the state of Maryland of $50,000 in United States six per cent stock, from the sale of which at the market value, about $40,000 was realized. But more money was needed to place the public buildings in readiness, and early in August the experiment was attempted of reviving the old expedient of a public sale of lots, but as the commissioners soon found, such events, instead of producing money, "only produced bad paper and perplexity."[1]

For the first time in the history of the city, the commissioners began to make liberal concessions to buyers of the city lots, providing always they became builders. Such concessions had been previously tried, but not on such a scale. Instead of taking off a few cents on the square foot as an inducement to builders the commissioners at this time almost cut their prices in half.

This policy, as well as a conviction that was quite generally entertained at this period, not only by those interested in city property, but by outsiders, that the complete removal of the government would give a spring to city affairs and produce an active market, stimulated building.[2]

This latter condition is shown by the appointment of an official to have charge of the survey of lots and the certifying of levels to those about to build. A fee of $2 and expenses was fixed for this service and Robert King, Jr., son of Robert King the surveyor, in the employ of the commissioners, was appointed to that position.[3]

The growing importance of Washington as a centre may be

[1] Commissioners to Secretary of State, Aug. 27, 1800. Commissioners' Letter Book.

[2] A few days before congress met a notice was issued by the commissioners that "in order to give gentlemen from remote parts of the country an opportunity to purchase lots in the city of Washington, sales which began Oct. 10 at the Little Hotel will be continued from day to day 'till the whole are sold." Proceedings of Commissioners Nov. 14, 1800.

[3] Proceedings of Commissioners, Aug. 20, 1800. "Mr. Brent showed us a list of houses building at this time — 68 of brick and numberless wooden ones." Mrs. Thornton's Diary. Aug. 24, 1800.

inferred from the notices of stage lines and routes and the hours of service as set forth in the advertising columns of the *Centinel of Liberty* during the spring and summer and autumn months of 1800.

Travellers could have a weekly service between Georgetown and Annapolis, and a daily service between Georgetown and Alexandria and Baltimore. Leaving the stage office adjoining the Fountain Inn, Baltimore, at 11 A.M., the destination would be reached the evening of the same day, a journery of nine hours for those living in Georgetown. For those who wished to go to Alexandria, the night was spent in Georgetown and the journey resumed the next day. The fare from Georgetown to Baltimore was $4 and $3.50, with an allowance of twenty pounds weight of baggage. Leaving Georgetown at 4 A.M., Baltimore would be reached at one o'clock P.M. The next morning at three A.M. the journey could be resumed to Philadelphia, which would be reached the following morning after a trip of twenty-two hours. The fare from Baltimore to Philadelphia was $8, or from Washington $11.50.[1]

A stage service that was adequate in May, 1800, apparently did not meet the requirements of those who the following month wanted to travel between Baltimore and the District towns, so that early in June of that year arrangements were made by which the stage left Alexandria at 3 A.M., Georgetown 5 A.M., Tunnicliff's Tavern 6 A.M., thus shortening the time between Georgetown and Baltimore one hour, as well as making the trip from Alexandria to Baltimore in one day.[2]

The pioneer daily service between Georgetown and Washington was started in May, 1800, when a two-horse stage was put on the route, leaving M Street near Wisconsin Avenue at half

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, May 6 and July 11, 1800.

[2] The same, June 6, 1800. In the issue of July 15 the Little Hotel is mentioned as a stopping place of one of the lines of the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington City stages, for evidently there was competition. The proprietors of the above-mentioned line announced that their coaches left Baltimore at 2 A.M. and arrived in Philadelphia at nine the evening of the same day, thus reducing the time from twenty-two to nineteen hours.

after eight in the morning and going to Tunnicliff's Tavern. Returning to the starting point by 11 A.M., the horses were ready for another trip at 2 P.M., returning by 5 P.M.

In April, 1800, a stage ran once a week between Georgetown and Frederick, which by the middle of July had become semi-weekly. The stage left at 4 A.M. and reached Frederick the evening of the same day. The fare was $3.[1]

No more characteristic feature of the city during the coming years can be pointed out than its newspapers, which owed their origin mainly to the fact that Washington was the seat of government. The organ or organs of the dominant political party were naturally the most prominent in the long list of newspapers that sprang into being and then passed away. But in addition the minority party had at times its newspaper, while special causes and reforms were provided with such vehicles of expression and publicity. At the very outset, in a little more than a month after the city had become the seat of government, this phase found expression, and the terms of the announcement of these new enterprises show very clearly that it was Washington as the seat of government, and more especially as the meeting place of congress, that was the motive, and not Washington the town. For more than two years Washington had been without a newspaper, and while the population had increased, there had been no attempt to supply a successor to the *Washington Gazette*. In the latter part of July, 1800, the pioneer in what proved to be a long and varied list of newspapers, was announced. "On the first day of the next session of Congress," so the notice read,[2] a daily paper would be published in the city of Washington under the title of the *Washington Advertiser*. "Mr. Brown, editor of the *Federal Gazette*, will be one of the proprietors."

At this time, too, Messrs. Green and English, the proprietors of the *Centinel of Liberty* of Georgetown, then having passed its fourth anniversary, gave notice of their purpose to publish a

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, July 22, 1800.

[2] The same, July 25, 1800. The prospectus appeared in the issue of Aug. 12, 1800, signed Brown and Snowden.

daily paper "when Congress removes to the City of Washington."

A few weeks later in the same medium appeared the prospectus of the *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser,* that was to be published by Samuel Harrison Smith on the first of October, 1800, in the new city.[1] It was to appear three times a week, and was to be "conducted on national principles." This prospectus also appeared in the *Universal Gazette* of Philadelphia, a weekly paper which Mr. Smith had been conducting for more than three years succeeding his first venture in the journalistic line, the *New World,* which for two months in 1796 was issued twice a day, morning and evening. However, this novel scheme for that period was soon abandoned for one daily issue. In the following year the publication of a paper friendly to the political aspirations of Mr. Jefferson was looked upon as desirable.

To accomplish this object, Mr. Smith purchased from Joseph A. Gales a weekly published in Philadelphia under the name of the *Independent Gazeteer.* Changing the name to the *Universal Gazette,* Mr. Smith began the publication Nov. 16, 1797. It was by Jefferson's advice and through his encouragement that the young editor, then in his twenty-eighth year, decided to transfer his printing plant to the new city. He also took to himself a wife, marrying on the 28th of September, 1800, Margaret Bayard, the daughter of Colonel John Bayard, a soldier of the revolutionary army and a member of the continental congress. The young couple established their home in one of the Ten Buildings on New Jersey Avenue between D and E streets, S. E., where the printing office was located and where the *Intelligencer* was published during the first year of its existence.[2]

Jefferson's substantial interest in the young man, who served as secretary of the American Philosophical Society when Jefferson was the president, was early manifested after Mr.

[1] *Centinel of Liberty,* Aug. 27, 1800.

[2] Recollections of George Watterston, *National Intelligencer,* Aug. 26, 1847.

Smith came to the new city, as he called at his house one day in December, 1800, bringing to be printed the manuscript of what came to be known as Jefferson's manual, which appeared Feb. 27, 1801.[1] The *Universal Gazette* continued to be published in the new city as a weekly.[2] In his prospectus Mr. Smith gave notice that in the *Intelligencer* another plan would be pursued than had been the case with the *Gazette*. In the publication of the latter he states he had confined himself to recording events as they occurred and in giving the opinions of others rather than his own. But he proposed in the *Intelligencer* "to enlighten not only by fact but by reason. The tendency of public measures and the conduct of public men will be examined with candor and truth."

To what extent this plan was a departure from the course pursued by newspapers of the day, could only be determined with exactness by a study of the contemporaries of the *Intelligencer*. But it is quite evident from even a casual inspection of the *Philadelphia Aurora*, edited by William Duane, or even of the *Washington Gazette*, that before the appearance of the *Intelligencer* there were not lacking editors who expressed their opinions freely about current events and did not content themselves with making their newspapers merely the vehicles of publishing current happenings and the opinions of other men and not their own.

The earliest of the newspaper enterprises to materialize was the *Washington Federalist*, which had its office in Georgetown and made its first appearance as a tri-weekly on the 25th of September, 1800. The publishers were William Alexander Rind and John Stewart,[3] who had removed the paper from

[1] First Forty years of Washington Society, p. 6, also issue of *Intelligencer*, Feb. 27, 1807.

[2] With the issue of the *Intelligencer*, the *Gazette* became its weekly edition. Its publication was continued to 1814.

[3] Later on Charles Prentiss, a young Harvard College graduate, was the associate of Mr. Rind. He was the publisher of the *Child of Pallas*, a weekly literary journal which was issued in Baltimore about Dec. 1, 1800. Only eight numbers were printed. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 4, p. 44. Also Vol. 9, p. 97. See also note under *Washington Federalist* in catalogue of newspaper files in Library of Wisconsin Hist. Soc.

Richmond, Va., where it was published as the *Virginia Federalist*. As the publishers stated, the paper was to appear daily during the sessions of congress and thrice a week before and after at six dollars per annum. A week before congress convened, however, the publication ceased, in order, as the readers were informed, to enable the necessary preparations to be made for the change to a daily issue.[1] The career thus begun continued for some nine years.

Following closely upon the first appearance of the *Federalist* came a second candidate for public favor, but appealing to the opposite party, then on the eve of its first victory. This was *The Cabinet of the United States*, a daily that began publication in Georgetown about the first of October. The proprietor was James Lyon, a son of Matthew Lyon, the latter a newspaper editor of Vermont and a member of the House of Representatives from that state, having been elected while serving a sentence in prison under the sedition laws. Like his father, James Lyon was an ardent supporter of Jefferson, and had been publishing a newspaper in his interests in Richmond, called *The Friend of the People*, and also the *National Magazine*. He removed his printing press to Georgetown, where he continued the publication of the *National Magazine*, the first periodical to be printed in the District. According to a statement signed by a number of citizens that appeared in the *Centinel of Liberty*, Sept. 9, 1800, and commenting on an article printed in *The Cabinet*, the purpose in publishing the latter paper was to influence the presidential election then pending. As far as known, no copy of the *Cabinet* has been preserved, but from references to it in other papers of the day it is evident that Mr. Lyon did not hesitate to express freely his opinions.[2]

[1] *Washington Federalist*, Nov. 11, 1800.

[2] In the manuscript notes of Peter Force in the Library of Congress he states he had seen one issue, that of Jan. 5, 1801, No. 79, from which he copied the following: "a national paper by J. Lyon, printer to the sovereign people.

"Published daily in the District of Columbia at 5 dollars a year, half paid in advance [Motto] Moderate salaries, frequent elections and universal suffrage."

One issue of the *National Magazine* of this period of its existence has been preserved, if the accuracy of a title can be relied on that appeared in a book sales catalogue in this country of Oct. 25, 1909, which read as follows: "National Magazine by James Lyon, Vol. 2, No. 7. District of Columbia, 1800." In the latter part of October, 1801 the two publications of James Lyon were combined and appeared under the name of the *National Magazine or Cabinet of the United States*, and under the editorship of Richard Dinmore. It was published weekly to Jan. 11, 1802, by the Washington Printing and Bookselling Co. that used in its imprint the title Franklin Press.[1] The publishers of the *Centinel of Liberty*, with the plan of issuing a daily still in mind, during the summer of 1800 informed the public the daily would appear "some time in October next under the title of the *Museum and Washington and Georgetown Daily Advertiser*. Also the *Washington Museum*, to be published three times a week." [2]

But October came and went, and in the meanwhile a daily newspaper had entered the field, two tri-weeklies and a weekly, so the Georgetown publishers reached the conclusion which was announced in the issue of their paper of Dec. 4, 1800, that the prospect of another daily paying expenses was not encouraging enough to warrant the risk. However, they concluded to issue three times a week instead of twice a week. The *Centinel* was federal in politics, and with the *Federalist* of the same political hue, and the Anti-federalists or Republicans represented by the *Cabinet* and the *Intelligencer*, the newspaper political equipoise seemed to be maintained.

The first issue under the new name of the *Museum and Washington and Georgetown Advertiser* occurred Nov. 18, 1800, and it was also Volume 1, No. 1, thus closing completely the career of the *Centinel of Liberty*.

The third daily, of which a prospectus only had been pub-

[1] In the Duane pamphlets, Library of Congress, is No. III of the *National Magazine or Cabinet of the United States* of Nov. 19, 1801. The Library also has Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8. Issues of the District of Columbia Press in 1800–1802. A. P. C. Griffin. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. IV.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Aug. 29, 1800.

lished, did not appear on Monday, Nov. 17th, the date of the assembling of congress, as the prospective publishers, Messrs. Brown and Snowden had announced, but that was due, they explained, to the non-arrival of materials.[1] A couple of days' delay would only be required, they thought, but when that time passed and in fact an entire week, a statement was finally issued that they had found the prospects of meeting the expenses of the publication were not encouraging. Such expenses, they stated, would amount to at least $4000 per annum. Having received, they added, the most flattering encouragement at Alexandria, their office would be removed to that place and they expected to commence in a short time the publication of the *Alexandria Advertiser and Columbian Record.*[2] This expectation was realized on the 8th of December, 1800, except the new daily journal bore the name of the *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligence,* which was changed in September, 1803, to the *Alexandria Daily Advertiser.* The publishers were Alexander Snowden and Co., who purchased the establishment of the *Columbia Mirror and Alexandria Gazette,* a semi-weekly and at one time a tri-weekly, which had been in existence eight years. The publication of a daily newspaper in *Alexandria* was not an experiment, as the *Times and Alexandria Advertiser* had been at that time issued daily for more than three years. Probably about this time the change in name took place, and it became the *Times and District of Columbia Daily Advertiser.*[3] The *Alexandria Advertiser* was the advocate of the principles of the political party then just retiring from power, but the new enterprise flourished, as by the following June it was issued on an enlarged sheet and the publishers announced this was done from "a persuasion that the increasing prosperity of the emporium of the District of Columbia authorizes the attempt."[4] In about a year and a half the other daily, the *Times,* gave up

[1] *Centinel of Liberty,* Nov. 18, 1800.

[2] *Washington Federalist,* Nov. 25, 1800.

[3] F. and J. D. Wescott, publishers.

[4] *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligencer,* April 6 and June 8, 1801. This paper is still in existence, and is issued weekly under the name of the *Alexandria Gazette.*

the struggle, and its valedictory was printed in the issue of July 31, 1802.[1] The first issue of the *National Intelligencer* did not appear until Oct. 31, 1800, the arrival of the printing press having been delayed by a storm which drove ashore the vessel bearing it. The *Universal Gazette* made its first appearance in the new field on the 6th of November, so that in the space of some six weeks, the new city, Georgetown and Alexandria, had four dailies, two tri-weeklies and one magazine, occupying a field that had been served by a daily and two semi-weekly newspapers. Of the journals of the earlier period the only publication north of the Potomac was the semi-weekly *Centinel of Liberty* in Georgetown.

The earliest mention of the United States Supreme Court in connection with the new federal seat occurred the latter part of August, 1800, when a paragraph appeared in the *Centinel of Liberty* (Aug. 26), announcing the appointment of Elias B. Caldwell as clerk of the court in place of Samuel Bayard. The court had adjourned its February term on the 13th of that month, before the date of the removal of the executive departments had been fixed upon, and it therefore met for the August term in the usual place in Philadelphia. At that time the change was made in the office of clerk and the Georgetown paper stated that Mr. Caldwell intended to make his home in that place. It is quite evident he had come to the new city, although the court did not assemble until the next term, which opened Feb. 2, 1801. A couple of weeks before, in response to a request to congress from the commissioners of the city for the assignment of a room in the Capitol "for the temporary accommodation" of the court, the senate consented to the use of one of the committee rooms.[2]

A month before this action by the supreme court, another attribute of the capital city of a nation was manifested by the

[1] It was succeeded by the *Columbian Advertiser and Commercial, Mechanic, and Agricultural Gazette.* Harvard Library, Aug. 4, 1802, Vol. 1, No. 1, a tri-weekly. The last number in this file is Nov. 22, 1802, Vol. 1, No. 49.

[2] Annals of Congress, 6th Cong., Jan. 21, 1801, p. 734. The room selected adjoined on the south the senate chamber.

establishment there of the headquarters of the Marine Corps, where a small detachment had been located for some weeks. Since the organization of that arm of the military service under the act of July 11, 1798, as the corps was disbanded at the close of the war of the revolution, the headquarters had been at Philadelphia. The first commandant, Colonel W. W. Burrows, accompanied the detachment to Washington, and at first the quarters were in Georgetown.[1]

In a few weeks the headquarters were removed to the reservation selected for the National University on E Street between 23d and 25th streets, N. W., where tents were set up. When Colonel Burrows went with his wife to return a call made by Mrs. Thornton he confided to her that the thermometer in his tent on the 29th of August recorded 94. The previous week Mrs. Thornton and her mother "went to the Hill to hear the band, which was playing at the tents which are fixed on the ground intended for an University." [2]

A year later the marines were still in their camp, and the commanding officer had the same difficulty experienced ever since at military posts, for in the proceedings of the commissioners of Aug. 20, 1801, a complaint from Colonel Burrows was recorded about Charles Purdy selling liquor to the soldiers, "thereby occasioning great disturbance in the camp in this city." "The said Purdy," the record continues, "to appear here to-morrow morning at ten o'clock to answer the charges, or we shall think it our duty to order his house to be pulled down, it being on the public ground."

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, July 22, 1800. There is a letter in the letter books of the U. S. Marine Corps from Colonel Burrows dated "Washington City, July 28, 1800."

[2] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, p. 181, Col. Hist. Soc., Vol. X. Aug. 21, 1800.

This is the first recorded open air concert by the marine band in the capital city, where for so many years such events have been features of the life of the city. The first reference to a corps of musicians in connection with the marine corps is found in a letter dated Feb. 4, 1800, of Colonel Burrows to Lieutenant Thomas Barclay at Alexandria, Va., who was evidently there on recruiting duty, suggesting the enlisting of boys to be taught as fifers and drummers.

In the *Intelligencer* of April 3, 1801, appeared an advertisement offering a premium of $100 for a "plan of a barracks for the Marines sufficient to hold 500 men with their officers and a house for the commandant. The plan must be so drawn as to be capable of being hereafter enlarged, and must be so arranged as to suit the dimensions of the lot, which has an east and west front of 615 feet and a north and south front of 250 feet. The plans must all be lodged with the Navy Office before the 1st of May." The dimensions given are those of Square 927, bounded by 8th, 9th, G and I streets, S. E., where the barracks were erected and where they have been ever since.

The entire 8th Street front of this square was assigned to the public in the division and the 9th Street tier of lots to William Prout, the original proprietor. By an arrangement similar to that made with the owners of lots acquired for the enlargement of the navy yard reservation, lots owned by the public were given to Mr. Prout in exchange, and on the 25th of May the title to the entire square was vested in the public. On the 9th of June following the commissioners agreed to sell to the United States the square at four cents per square foot, aggregating $6247. "General Samuel Smith being present and by direction of the President of the United States agreeing." [1]

There were other duties awaiting the marines, than serving as an escort to the president or catering to the public pleasure through their band. For the commissioners sought to be relieved from the expense of providing watchmen to protect the public structures, and they asked the secretary of the navy "if two or more marines of those stationed in the city can be spared for that duty during the night." [2]

There is no record that the detail requested was made. Probably if it had been, trouble would have resulted from the presence of armed men in military garb, where they would have come in contact with the public. For in the tense feeling that

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, June 9, 1801. The deed was given June 20. At that time General Smith of Maryland was serving for a brief period, and without compensation as secretary of the navy, having declined the appointment.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, July 31, 1800.

marked the political campaign then in progress and which resulted in the overthrow of the federal party and the passing of the control of the government to their opponents, all manifestations of authority of the central government were scrutinized with jealous fear. This phase of the political situation was illustrated at the election for members of the Maryland legislature held at Georgetown on the 6th of October, 1800. In the previous spring the arrangement of election districts in Maryland had been changed, and Georgetown had been made the polling place of the fifth district, including all that part of Montgomery County lying within the territory of Columbia.[1]

On the day of election a file of marines in command of a sergeant appeared at the voting place in Georgetown, for the purpose, as explained, of arresting any enlisted men who might be found there and bringing them back to the quarters where they had been ordered to be restricted for the day.[2] To the editor of the *Cabinet* this appearance "at the hustings" of soldiers "with fixed bayonets" furnished "sufficient cause for contesting and annulling the election in this county."[3] It is apparent that the event created much comment at the polls. "The accumulated indignation of the citizens" was given as a reason in the *Cabinet* for the withdrawal of the soldiers, while according to the editor of the *Federalist* an explanation of the circumstances allayed all indignation.

No doubt the "accumulated indignation" which the *Cabinet* reports as having marked the temper of the crowd received some accretions from the mind of the writer whose article was written when a count of the votes showed that the federalists were in the majority in the election district. A similar return came from Bladensburg, which was the voting place of the district of Prince George County, which included the city of Washington.[4]

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, May 30, 1800.

[2] *Washington Federalist*, Oct. 11, 1800.

[3] The same.

[4] The votes cast at Georgetown for four members to serve in the legislature ranged from 182 to 178 for each candidate on the federal ticket, while those on the anti-federal ticket received from 164 to

However, while Montgomery and Prince George counties adhered to the party in power, the voters throughout the state sent an anti-federal majority to the legislature, thus reversing the political position of that state and placing it in the anti-federal ranks. Virginia, however, furnished no surprise but gave its vote to the new party.[1]

But this was only the preliminary skirmish to the great contest that closed on the 11th of November when the votes were counted for the presidential electors who were expected to vote for John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Due notice was given in the newspapers of the polls at Georgetown and at Bladensburg, and in one of these notices "the Federal Republicans of the city of Washington are requested to meet at the Capitol Hill on Monday, next, being the second Monday in November, and from thence proceed to Bladensburg, where the election will be held." [2]

When the votes came to be counted, it was found that the federalists at Georgetown had won by a narrow margin of fourteen votes, while at Bladensburg their opponents had carried the election by a majority of ten votes.[3]

For the time the local interest in the result of the presidential election, and it was not known until about the middle of December, more than a month later, that Jefferson had been the choice over Adams, undoubtedly gave way to interest in the nearer event, and one of great moment to the citizens,—the first meeting of congress in the new city. This was fixed for November 17, and a month before that date a call for a meeting of citizens to be held at the Little Hotel appeared in

158 votes. At Bladensburg the federal candidates received from 270 to 216 and the anti-federalist from 220 to 204. It is evident the Prince George County district was the largest of the two.

[1] *Washington Federalist*, Oct. 11, 1800. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 31, 1800.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 7, 1800.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 12, 1800. This was the last national election, and in the case of the one preceding the last state election, participated in by the citizens of the District, with the exception of those residing in the Virginia portion of the District, who regained these political rights after the retrocession act of 1846.

the public press to devise a method to express their joy at the meeting of "The Grand Council of the nation." [1]

A procession was decided upon, and a committee was appointed to coöperate with other committees that might be appointed from Alexandria and Georgetown.[2] It was arranged that a procession be formed in front of the Little Hotel on the 22d of November to accompany the president to the capitol, the day selected when he was to deliver his message in the presence of both houses of congress, as was the custom at that day. Upon the arrival of the procession at the capitol congress was to be presented with "a respectful and appropriate address from the inhabitants of the territory." [3] But there was no procession, and Oliver Wolcott, the secretary of the treasury, records he "was told that some dispute respecting the appointment of a master of ceremonies prevented a display of the citizens." [4] There is no other explanation of the failure to carry out the plans apparently carefully matured, as calls for the assembling of the various military bodies and the frequent meetings of the committee on arrangements would indicate. The weather conditions may have had something to do with it, as the day before three inches of snow fell, "a very unusual fall of snow." [5] However "a congratulatory letter from sundry inhabitants of the District of Columbia" was presented in the House.[6] A poetically inclined citizen wrote a song inspired by the meeting of congress, the burden of which was that the "central spot" should be maintained, so that the meeting of congress for the first time in the new city did not pass without some recognition from the public.[7]

[1] *Washington Federalist*, Oct. 16, 1800.

[2] *Centinel of Liberty*, Oct. 21, 1800. Also *Washington Federalist* same date. The committee consisted of Leonard Harbaugh, William Lovering, James Hoban, Robert Brent, John Kearney, Clotworthy Stephenson, Richard Forrest, Daniel Carroll of Duddington and Thomas Munroe.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 17, 1800.

[4] Memories of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams, Vol. 11, p. 456. Letter to Mrs. Wolcott dated Dec. 4, 1800.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 21, 1800.

[6] Annals of Congress. 6th Cong., p. 787.

[7] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 19, 1800.

President Adams came to the city on the first of November and went at once to the partially finished president's house, which has been the home of all his successors.[1] On the 16th of November Mrs. Adams reached the capital city and her impressions of the place and the condition of the president's house as recorded in a letter to her daughter, Mrs. Smith, dated five days later are not only interesting but the principal contemporary account. She gave expression to an opinion that was held by others that the grand scale of the house was not "very well proportioned to the President's salary."[2] There were no bells in the house, a great scarcity of fire-wood, not a single apartment finished, and the unfinished East Room was used to hang the family washing. To add to this picture of rawness and incompleteness, Mrs. Adams might have learned from a Philadelphia paper before she reached her destination that the president had an attack of chills and fever. This report, which was reprinted in a Baltimore paper, was promptly denied in the *Centinel of Liberty* or *Museum*, to use the new name of that journal.[3]

The incomplete condition of the president's house was apparently due to the lack of money rather than inefficiency in the direction of affairs. It was not until the opening of the building season in the spring of 1800 the plastering of the interior was begun.[4] Only a part of the house was plastered at that time and as late as the year 1803 "the walls of some of the bed chambers, the great room at the

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 4, 1800. "The President, with his secretary, Mr. Shaw, passed by in his chariot and four, no retinue, only one servant on horseback," writes Mrs. Thornton in her diary, Nov. 1.

[2] Letters of Mrs. Adams, pp. 432–435.

[3] Nov. 18, 1800. It is apparent this type of miasmatic disorder was quite common in the city from the earliest period. Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith, after two years of residence, writes that habit has so reconciled her to attacks of this kind that she continued to go about as usual "with the ague, sometimes with the fever on me. I know that nothing will keep off the fit and may as well have it in one place as another." First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 33.

[4] *Centinel of Liberty*, Feb. 18, 1800. Advertisement of the contractor for plasterers to begin work at the president's house, March 1, 1800.

east end of the house and of the principal stairs were still naked." [1]

The attention of the commissioners had been called by the secretary of the president early in November to the lack of bells in the house, and he was informed that this defect would be remedied in the course of a few days. But it was not until Mr. Adams's successor came to the house in the following March that they were supplied.[2]

The grounds about the house were in a still more unfinished state. The commissioners had been asked by Secretary of the Navy Stoddert, the latter part of January, 1800, to lay out a garden and provide the necessary out houses, but owing to lack of funds these improvements were not made.[3]

Although the 17th of November was the date fixed upon for the meeting of congress in the new city, when that day arrived a quorum of neither house was present. On the next day the house had a quorum, but the senate did not have such a quota until the 21st. The following day the president met both houses in the senate chamber and read his message.[4]

The first assemblage of the representatives of the nation in the new city was in a dignified setting. The north wing of the capitol was the only portion of the proposed structure then erected, as only the foundations for the dome or central section were built, while the walls of the south wing were but a few feet above the ground. The exterior walls of the north wing were

[1] B. H. Latrobe's report in report of committee to ascertain the expenditures on the public buildings in the city of Washington, Dec 21, 1808.

[2] Commissioners' Letter Book, Nov. 9, 1800, and March 12, 1801.

[3] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, p. 101. As late as March 20, she notes "After breakfast we walked with Dr. T. to the ground behind the President's House which he is going to have enclosed and laid out for a garden. It is at present in great confusion, having on it old brick kilns, pits to contain water used by the brick makers, rubbish, etc. The Commissioners have agreed to have a few hands employed on this."

[4] The house had 106 members and the senate 32, and of the latter nineteen were Federal and thirteen Republican. There were fifty-four Federals and fifty-two Republicans in the house.

built of sandstone except the south side, where temporary walls of brick and some part of the walls of the central section served as a protection from the weather. As can be seen to-day, the design expressed in simple lines and restrained detail furnished a pleasing type of the Italian Renaissance. The floor of the senate room was at that time on a level with the basement floor of the building and the ceiling extended through two stories. A colonnade of wooden pillars covered with lath and plaster rested upon a range of arches cased in wood. The entablature of plaster was richly decorated. The gallery was behind the colonnade. On the walls hung the portraits of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette presented to the continental congress in 1784 by the king.[1]

The entrance to the chamber of the house was on the next floor. The room occupied the space on the west front of the building with the ceiling through the height of two floors.[2]

As might be expected, the president in his message referred to the removal of the seat of government to the new location and offered his congratulations to "the people of the United States on the assembling of Congress at the permanent seat of their government, and I congratulate you, gentlemen, on the prospect of a residence not to be changed."[3] He also reminded his hearers that it was for them "to consider whether the local powers over the District of Columbia vested by the Constitution in the Congress of the United States shall be immediately exercised."

"If in your opinion," he added, "this important trust ought now to be exercised, you cannot fail, while performing it, to take into view the future probable situation of the territory, for the happiness of which you are about to provide. You will consider it as the Capital of a great nation advancing with un-

[1] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, p. 214, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 10.

[2] Description by B. H. Latrobe, *Intelligencer*, March 17, 1812. In History of the United States Capitol, p. 27, a drawing of the exterior of the north wing as it then appeared is given, reproduced from plans and other data, as well as ground plans of the several stories.

[3] Annals of Congress, 6th Cong., p. 723.

exampled rapidity in arts, in commerce, in wealth and in population, and in possessing within itself those energies and resources, which if not thrown away, will secure to it a long course of prosperity and self-government."

"Usage required," wrote a contemporary and a member of the House, "that the answer should be presented in a personal attendance of the whole House at the presidential mansion. But how could this be done? The only access was by a road long and circuitous to avoid the swamp already mentioned [on line of Pennsylvania Avenue] and the mud very deep. Fortunately a recruit of hackney coaches from Baltimore, by their seasonable arrival, enabled us to proceed in fine style, preceded by the sergeant-at-arms with the mace, on horseback." [1] At the next session of congress a new "usage" was established by Jefferson, who sent his message to congress by his secretary, which continued to be the practice up to the administration of Woodrow Wilson. Jefferson, in a letter to the senate explaining the reason for this change, said that "the circumstance under which we find ourselves at this place rendering inconvenient the mode heretofore practiced etc." [2] What was of still more consequence at that period it was also a custom established by the *Federalists*.

The vice-president, Mr. Jefferson, did not arrive in the city until the 27th of November.[3] He had rooms in the boarding house of Conrad and McMunn, who leased the house occupied by Thomas Law at the northwest corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. E.[4] The adjoining house, also owned by Law, was included in the lease and was designed for the accommodation of travellers and the usual patrons of a tavern. The corner house was occupied by members of congress. Jefferson, in addition to a bedroom enjoyed the distinction unusual in the then extent of accommodations in the city of hav-

[1] Correspondence and Miscellanies of John Cotton Smith, p. 208.

[2] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess. 1801–1802, p. 11.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 28, 1800.

[4] The same, Nov. 24, 1800. Mrs. Smith states in her reminiscences that Mr. Law in giving up his house removed to a dwelling on Greenleaf Point.

ing a parlor or reception room. But he ate at the common table with the other occupants of the house.[1]

Across the Avenue at the northeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street were two houses built by Thomas Law and leased by Robert W. Peacock, and where another "Congressional mess," as these parties of fellow-boarders were termed, found accommodations. The speaker of the house, Theodore Sedgwick of Massachusetts, belonged to this mess, and in recognition of the dignity of his office was allowed a room by himself. But the rest of the members were obliged to room in pairs. Separate beds, however, were provided, and as the rooms were spacious and the table good, living under such conditions appeared not disagreeable.[2]

Stelle's Tavern and that of Tunnicliff's near the capitol building also provided shelter for members. It is also probable that some of the members found quarters at the Washington Hotel kept by William Lovell on Pennsylvania Avenue near 15th, and also at the house of William Rhodes, the northeast corner of 15th and F streets.

Another opportunity for the newcomers to find food and lodging was offered by William O'Neal, whose business in that line in later years developed into the Franklin House on the north side of I Street, between 20th and 21st. At that time Mr. O'Neal had accommodations for "three or four gentlemen during the session of Congress." He was then in the same location and in what was then called the "Three Buildings." [3]

The discomforts of living in "a new settlement," especially one scattered over such an area as was included within the bounds of Washington, were no doubt unpleasantly in evidence

[1] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 12. Reminiscences of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith. The number of occupants is given as thirty.

[2] Correspondence and Miscellanies of John Cotton Smith, p. 208. The miscellanies in which these details appeared consist of recollections and not contemporary accounts. Also *Intelligencer*, Oct. 31, 1806. Mr. Smith also notes the lodgings in Georgetown were of a superior order and in that place he states most of the southern members made their homes.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 8, 1800.

during these early months, although the records left of such experiences by the men and women who passed through them are neither numerous nor extended. It may have been, as noted by Mr. Woodward in speaking of the coming of the government to the new city, that "it came agitated by political contest. It forgot its inconvenience and privation in the ardor of triumph." [1]

The variety and interest in life was enjoyed which is always to be found when intelligent men and women are living in the same locality. The mornings were devoted to visiting, and owing to the distances carriages were commonly kept.[2]

The dinner hour was two o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the business in the government departments apparently ended for the day.[3] Sometimes invitations were extended to a larger company to come in after the dinner for tea, which was served about six o'clock. On the days when the dancing assemblies were held, the guests were expected at half after five-o'clock. In the fall of 1800 there were two of these social organizations formed of those who subscribed. One was held at Stelle's Tavern and the other at Tunnicliff's.[4] The presi-

[1] Considerations on the Government of the Territory of Columbia No. 8, p. 21.

[2] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 45. See also Mrs. Thornton's Diary. Mrs. Smith (page 2) recounts the experience of one morning. She left her house at New Jersey Avenue and E Street, S. E. one morning in November, 1800, in company with Mr. Smith to call on Captain Thomas Tingey and Mrs. Tingey, who lived in a two-story frame house at the northwest corner of 11th and G streets, S. E. (*Centinel of Liberty*, April 6, 1801.) Between the two houses, she states, extended "a plain of near half a mile." They sat with Mrs. Tingey for more than an hour, Captain Tingey not being home, and then walked a mile to the home of Thomas Law on Greenleaf's Point, where they stayed for dinner. The company was increased at the meal by "four or five gentlemen who had accidentally come in. Soon after Captain Tingey's family joined us." Thomas Peter and Lawrence Lewis, the brothers-in-law of Mrs. Law, joined the party.

[3] Statements of government employees in depositions relative to the fires in the war and treasury departments. American State Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 247.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 21, 1800, and *Washington Federalist*, Oct. 25, 1800. At one of these gatherings it was stated one hundred ladies and gentlemen were present.

dent's house early became a social centre, and before Mrs. Adams arrived Mr. Adams held what was called a levee.[1]

On Sunday those inclined to attend church could go to Christ Church on New Jersey Avenue, which Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith, who lived a few blocks away, recalled as a small frame building that had been a tobacco house, purchased from Daniel Carroll.[2] At this church the annual observance of St. John's Day by Federal Lodge No. 15 was held.[3] It was probably realized that the situation of Christ Church was rather remote from what rapidly became the centre of the new city, and so commencing in May, 1801, services were held by the rector, Rev. A. T. McCormick, each Sabbath afternoon at four o'clock "at the new war office" in the corridor.[4]

St. Patrick's Catholic Church on F Street, between 9th and 10th streets, and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on the square just to the west, both frame structures, had their doors open on the first day of the week.[5]

Beginning the first Sunday in November, morning and afternoon services were held in the hall or corridor of the treasury office, conducted by ministers appointed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Associate Reformed Synod of the United States. The expense was met by subscriptions from those interested.[6]

Another medium of intercourse was the military companies

[1] Mrs. Thornton's Diary, pp. 210 and 219. Three days after Mrs. Thornton called Mrs. Adams returned it in person, p. 214.

[2] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 13.

[3] In the notice of this event in the *Centinel of Liberty*, June 13, 1800, the lodge room is mentioned as being "at Brother Frost's South Capital Street," while a similar notice in the *National Intelligencer* of Dec. 8, 1800, locates the lodge room "in the dwelling house of Mr. Coningham in the New Jersey Avenue."

[4] *Intelligencer*, May 15, 1801.

[5] During the summer of 1800 Rev. Michael Arthur of England announced his purpose of starting a school in the Presbyterian Church. *Centinel of Liberty*, June 20, 1800, while through the same medium on Oct. 31, 1800, it was stated that Rev. David Wiley was in charge of the Columbian Academy in Georgetown.

[6] *Washington Federalist*, Oct. 18, 1800. The *Museum*, Nov. 18, 1800.

organized under the laws of Maryland and in accordance with the United States law of May 8, 1792, providing for a uniform militia in the various states. While the state authorities organized the militia, the arms were largely supplied by the general government. The organization as outlined in the United States law was divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions and companies, each brigade consisting of four regiments, each regiment of two battalions, each battalion of five companies and each company of sixty-four privates.

All free, able-bodied white male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, except public employees, ferry keepers and others who were placed in the exempt class were subject to service. It was the duty of the commanding officer of each company to enroll all citizens liable to military duty. There were several companies in the city in the spring of 1800, but as yet the city had not been laid off in districts, and in consequence of lack of specified areas from which the companies were drawn, some of the citizens were enrolled in more than one company.[1]

About the middle of November, 1800, the city was supplied with what in those days was a centre for the intellectual life of the place, namely, a book store. At that time, Rapine, Conrad and Company of Philadelphia opened such a place at the southeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and B Street, S. E. As usual with booksellers of that period, a printing office formed a part of the establishment, and the name of this firm appears on some of the earliest Washington imprints. It was known as the Washington Book Store.[2] An advertisement appeared in the *Intelligencer* of Jan. 7, 1801, announcing several publications. One was the *Washington Repository* for the year 1801, "published this day." From the table of contents as

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, May 13, 1800. Notice of Clotworthy Stephenson, captain of the Grenadiers. A notice in the same paper of Nov. 18, 1800, of a meeting of the officers of the 14th Regiment of the militia of Maryland to be held at Stelle's Tavern shows that the city at that time was the centre of a force that, if the organization was up to the requirements of the law, represented an enrollment of 640 men.

[2] The same, Nov. 14, 1800. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 17, 1800.

given in this advertisement and which furnishes the only information now available, as no copy is known to be in existence, this publication combined the features of an almanac and also a guide to the city as far as a list of members of congress and the government employees is concerned — the first of the sort of which there is any record.

On Saturday evening, Nov. 8, 1800, a fire that came from a defective chimney in the house of Jonathan Jackson on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, a short distance east of 22d Street, destroyed the adjoining house occupied by the war office. The loss was practically a complete one, as but few of the public records were saved. A fire engine that was kept in the corridors of the treasury office was hurried to the scene, but without avail. The body of Mr. Jackson, who had died that day, was taken from his residence to a place of safety.[1]

The defective method of building chimneys, leaving the floor joists exposed to the heat of the fire, was also followed in the treasury office, where a fire from the same cause broke out in the evening of Jan. 20, 1801. The flames, however, were confined to the room occupied by the auditor, and as they were quickly gotten under control, there was but small loss.[2]

Owing to the political change that had taken place in the interval between the two fires, the rancor of feeling on the part of the victorious Republicans undoubtedly inspired an article in the *Cabinet* which charged that these fires were a part of a scheme of the Federalists to destroy the public records and thus get out of the way the evidences of misgovernment and misappropriation of funds which would be brought to light when the new administration took charge. It was specially noted that Oliver Wolcott, whose resignation as secretary of the treasury had taken effect on the last day of December, was at the treasury office while the fire was in progress and was

[1] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 10 and 12, 1800. *Centinel of Liberty*, Nov. 11, 1800.

[2] Report of House Committee, 2d Sess., No. 146, Feb. 28, 1801. American State Papers, Miscela., Vol. 1, p. 247. In the account of the Treasury fire in the Museum, Jan. 21, 1801, it is stated, "The President of the United States was observed in the ranks for conveying water."

seen superintending the carting away of boxes removed from the building.

In consequence of these charges a committee of the house investigated the causes of both fires, reached the conclusion that they were accidental, and furthermore that Mr. Wolcott had only taken away boxes containing papers which were his own property.

However, Joseph Hodgson, the owner of the house leased to the war office, brought suit for damages against Samuel Dexter, at the time of the fire secretary of war, but who had been transferred subsequently to the treasury office in Mr. Wolcott's place. The case was lost in the District circuit court, and on an appeal to the United States Supreme Court was decided against the plaintiff.[1]

Mr. Wolcott was summoned as a witness in the District court, and he stated that the entire action was inspired from political motives.[2]

One of the results of the loss of the public records by the burning of the war office is the impossibility of determining with any definiteness the early history of the assignment of the regular army for duty at the seat of government. In the lack of official data a notice signed by George Peter and dated Barracks, Georgetown, Nov. 11, 1800, offering a reward for a deserter in full artillery uniform indicates a military post there at that time.[3] A barracks was built at Greenleaf Point, the public reservation no doubt originally intended as a place of military occupation, but there is no means of determining the time. The building designed by George Hadfield for use as an arsenal in the year 1803 was erected "near the barracks, Greenleaf Point" in the year 1805.[4]

[1] Circuit Court Reports, Cranch 1, p. 109, December term, 1802. Reports Supreme Court United States, Cranch 1, p. 343.

[2] Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams, Vol. 2, p. 469.

[3] *Washington Federalist*, Nov. 24, 1800.

[4] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 179. In the same volume, p. 174, in a list of military posts in the year 1803–1804 is "Washington City, Columbia" where the force was reported to consist of 31, of which 21 were privates and six musicians.

The army was not in favor with the Republicans, and when congress enacted a law to discharge the officers and men of the additional army to take effect June 15, 1800, that day was celebrated in various parts of the country by republican festivals. One celebration of the sort was held in Alexandria, where toasts were drunk to the Tree of Liberty, the fifteenth of June, and to the hope that every nation might soon be freed from supporting that engine of despotism, a standing army.[1]

[1] Quoted in McMaster's History of the People of the United States, Vol. 11, p. 483, from the *Aurora*, June 23, 1800.

# CHAPTER XV

## DISTRICT GOVERNMENT PROBLEM

When and how was the power of exclusive legislation granted by the constitution to congress over the ten mile square which had become the seat of government to be exercised? Was it to be immediately exercised, as President Adams in his message at the first session of that body in the new territory had declared it was for them to consider? Did the actual removal of the government to the new location amount to an assumption, or was it necessary that congress should "otherwise by law provide" before the operation of the laws of the states should cease? But if congress should assume its constitutional powers, what provision could be made to secure the political rights of the residents of the District?

This was the problem that came before congress at an early day. For the first time this clause of the constitution, so novel in its nature, was fairly up for consideration and, what was more, for a practical interpretation. What was to be done about it? There is but slight indication that it had up to this time been given much attention. At the previous session a committee of which General Henry Lee was chairman had been appointed to draw up rules and regulations respecting the District of Columbia, but no further action is recorded.

Mr. Woodward asserted in his essay No. 5, on the government of the territory of the District, that General Lee proposed preparing a code of laws for the District which is the earliest reference to a subject that was agitated for many years. There is no record of any effort made to carry out such a purpose at this period. During the summer a brief communication appeared in the Georgetown newspaper, in which the writer propounded some general inquiries relating to the new status of the District.[1]

[1] *Centinel of Liberty*, July 29, 1800.

But no response was elicited, and there was no further reference to the subject. Then came the president's message, and the portion relating to the District was referred in both houses to committees. In less than two weeks reports were made.

The senate committee merely announced an opinion that the jurisdiction in the District had become vested exclusively in congress to the exclusion of that of the states.[1] The house committee was of the same mind on that phase of the situation, but went farther and proposed to adopt for the territory the entire body of laws of the two states, in force on the first Monday in December, 1800. The executive and judicial officers of the two states were to be continued in office, subject to removal by the president, who thereafter was to appoint such officers. The powers of the corporations of Georgetown and of Alexandria as well as any body corporate in the District were to be continued unimpaired.[2]

What the effect of the house measure would be, was pointed out in a newspaper communication signed "a citizen of Columbia."[3] One result, the writer asserted, would be to disenfranchise the people of the District and to doom them to political slavery. He suggested that congress be petitioned to forbear legislation on this subject until "provision is made for some adequate form of Government to preserve the political rights which every American holds dear."

On the same date the first of four essays entitled Considerations on the Government of the District of Columbia, signed Epaminondas, appeared in the *National Intelligencer*.[4] The author was Augustus B. Woodward, a lawyer, a man of wide reading, a student of the classics and with a mind of a speculative cast. As early as 1795, his residence is given as Rock-

[1] Annals of Congress, 6th Cong., p. 731.

[2] The same, 6th Cong., p. 825.

[3] *The Museum*, Georgetown, Dec 24, 1800.

[4] Essay No. 1 was printed in the issue of Dec. 24, 1800; No. 2, Dec. 26; No. 3, Dec. 29; and No. 4, Dec. 31. On Jan. 31, 1801, these essays were published in pamphlet form with the imprint Washington, Samuel Harrison Smith, New Jersey Avenue, near the capitol, 1801.

bridge, Va. About that time he made the acquaintance of Thomas Jefferson, with whom he maintained a friendship which continued through the latter's life. He became a resident of Alexandria in 1797 and also the purchaser of some lots in the federal city where he established his residence in the year 1800.[1] Mr. Woodward was strongly of the opinion that it would be better to make no change at all in the political situation of the District than to adopt the plan proposed by the house committee, which has "cut the Gordian knot of all difficulties by a lethargic apathy and a refusal to investigate anything." He believed a permanent system of government should be devised, and proceeded to sketch such a system which in the first place would be in harmony with "an original principle of republicanism," to give to " all those who are governed by laws, the right to participate in the formation of them."

To accomplish this, he pointed out, an amendment to the constitution would be required, and he urged that the District be given representation in both houses of congress, and also a voice in the selection of president and vice-president. He referred to those who advocate the District remaining a part of the adjoining states as probably "not aware of the inconveniences to which this distracted state must reduce its inhabitants." After having adjusted the District in the federal system, the author urged the adoption of a territorial form of government for the conduct of local affairs. There was to be a legislature composed of two houses elected by white male citizens who were residents, a governor appointed by the president, having the veto power, while congress was to retain the right to repeal any law made by the local body or to make any regulation respecting the territory. Contrary to the practice of the day, suffrage without the usual property qualification or indeed any restriction except that of citizenship in the United States and residence in the District was to be enjoyed by its citizens.[2]

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. IV, p. 114.

[2] Professor McMaster points out in his account in the fifth volume of the History of the People of the United States, page 379, of the move-

The salary of the governor was to be paid by the United States, while the cost of the legislature was to be a charge on the local revenues. Mr. Woodward regarded the District as possessing resources adequate as any other part of the United States, and he considered that "every inhabitant ought to pride himself in this pecuniary independence and to discourage a constant application to congress for donations and charities which cannot fail in the end to make every state in the Union our enemy." He deprecated the failure of the committee in its report to make any reference to the financial relations of the general government and the District.

The author worked out his scheme of a government for the District to even the detail of suggesting that buildings for its home be erected on the reservation known as Town House Square and now Garfield Park on New Jersey Avenue to the south of the capitol.

On the 31st of December, 1800, the day when the final instalment of Mr. Woodward's essay appeared in the *Intelligencer*, the house entered upon the consideration of the report of the committee on the District government. As the first District day in the national legislature, the date is a notable one, but that cannot be said of the discussion which turned mainly on the question, the opinions varying as Federalist or Republican spoke, as to whether on the date named by the committee congress had or had not assumed in full its constitutional powers over the District. There were those who were opposed to assumption at this time because of the effect of such a course upon the political rights of the citizens, while on the other hand it was maintained that congress had no choice, but must make use of this power, as it was exclusive and differed in that

ment to expand the restricted franchise of the first state constitutions, that Kentucky and Vermont were the only states up to 1800 where manhood suffrage prevailed. In 1810 Maryland abolished the property qualification and gave suffrage to every free white male. The discussion of the franchise feature of the District government both in and out of Congress reflects the state of opinion of the day as it was slowly crystallizing. But it was not until nearly the middle of the century that manhood suffrage became general in the states.

respect from other powers vested in congress by the constitution.

As the people of the District had lived happily for the past ten years under the state governments, there was no need, it was urged, for congress to step in. If, however, congress went forward and exercised its powers, then the citizens of the District would become that most pitiable object, taxed without representation. While it is true, the advocates of assumption admitted, that the people of the District have lived happily for the past ten years under the state governments, yet the provision of the constitution on this subject had not been made with this view. It was made to bestow dignity and importance on the government.[1] At the same time, the opinion was expressed that something more than "an abstract proposition," as one of the speakers labelled the committee report, was needed at this time, and owing apparently to a general desire for some system of government, the report was recommitted and two members added to the committee.[2]

A week after the house had for the time disposed of the district government matter, the senate took similar action on the report of a committee of that body and recommitted it for further consideration and report. The first month of the new year had nearly ended before the subject was again taken up in either house, but during the three or four weeks that elapsed, the discussion was continued in public meeting and in the columns of newspapers as well as through the more usual medium of the day — the pamphlet. First there came a call for a public meeting of the citizens of Alexandria.[3] "The passive indifference which prevails on this important subject," the author of the communication suggesting a meeting, exclaimed, "would do honor to the subjects of a Turkish bashaw, but can reflect

[1] Annals of Congress, 6th Cong., p. 873.

[2] "The house by a large majority recommitted the bill, thereby expressing an opinion that an assumption by the general government might or might not be made, and that until actually made the laws of Virginia and Maryland remained in force." A history of the last session of Congress, *Intelligencer*, April 17, 1801.

[3] *Alexandria Advertiser and Commercial Intelligencer*, Jan. 6, 1801.

no credit on the American character or that of the citizens of Alexandria." He was of the opinion that if those who are as deeply interested as the citizens of the District would give some aid that "it would no doubt afford satisfaction to our rulers." He then sketched in outline what he regarded as the more important aspects of the subject, as to whether a total separation ought to be made of the District and the two states or whether the states ought to retain a modified jurisdiction, and if so, the extent and character of such modification. In the event a total separation between the District and the two states is decided upon, he asked, how can the citizens of the District retain rights as citizens of the United States? Then also what ought to be the local government provided and what the judicial plan?

A public meeting was held in Alexandria two weeks later, when resolutions were presented, but the discussion was postponed to a meeting arranged for a future day in the hope there would be present a larger representation of the citizens.[1]

In the meantime those present who had chosen Elisha C. Dick, chairman, and Henry Moore, secretary, directed the resolution to be published for the consideration of the citizens. In this measure it is declared that the power of exclusive legislation in the District vested in congress is "novel in the science of government, it is momentous to those whose lives, liberty and property are implicated in the issue. . . . We believe that Congress may exercise a legitimate jurisdiction over the District to any extent, whether partial or general, simultaneous or exclusive accordingly as expedience or necessity may dictate." The consequence of complete assumption was pointed out. "We shall then be deprived of all weight in the legislative councils of the nation; we can possess no share in the choice of our chief magistrate. . . . We shall then be completely disenfranchised in respect to the national government while we retain no security for participating in the formation even of the most minute local regulations by which we are to be affected. We shall be reduced to that deprecated condition of which we

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 16, 1801. Date line Alexandria, Jan. 14th.

pathetically complained in our charges against Great Britain of being taxed without representation." In conclusion congress is asked "to postpone the exercise of their powers to their full extent, till imperious circumstances shall require, but should Congress not think fit to grant this request, we earnestly entreat them to delay the full assumption till they shall have devised and matured a competent system of government and published it for the consideration of those who are naturally interested."

It is probable this is the memorial referred to in the proceedings of the house of Feb. 5, 1801, as having been presented. But the views set forth in this paper could not be claimed as those of all the people of Alexandria, for on the 26th of the preceding month a memorial had been received in the house signed by freeholders and inhabitants of Alexandria, praying the national legislature to establish in the District a system of law and government, which would be to assume jurisdiction, while a few days later a request of similar import was received from freeholders and inhabitants of Washington.

In the same vein were the resolutions that appeared in a newspaper communication signed Constantius.[1] The writer stated the resolutions were proposed for the consideration of the inhabitants of Georgetown, but there is no record of any further action or in fact of any expression of opinion on this subject from those residing in that section of the District. The author of the communication declared that it was the interest of the inhabitants of Georgetown and the country adjacent "to be separated totally and forever from all legislation and jurisdiction of the state of Maryland from and after the earliest day Congress passes a law for that purpose."

It was further declared that by an amendment to the constitution the District ought to be represented in the federal government and that a government for the District, similar to that of the United States and of the individual states, ought to be immediately established, congress retaining a controlling authority.

[1] *Georgetown Museum*, Jan. 12, 1801.

Another voice was heard on the current topic. It was that of the author of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of Jan. 26, 1801, who, in commenting on the recent fire in the treasury office, said that this occurrence, following the destruction of the war office, pointed to the need of establishing in the city a police, "which may require the citizens to have buckets and fire engines. . . . Of course," he added "the inhabitants of the District of Columbia are looking out with solicitous anxiety for the assumption of the jurisdiction by Congress, when more beneficial regulations will undoubtedly be adopted."

As is clearly shown by these utterances which now remain the only sources of information as to the current of public opinion in the District at that period, sentiment was divided, opinions varied. No doubt some voices that were raised carried with them no weight. It was possible for members of congress to sift evidence then as now, and also they gained knowledge of what the people wanted from personal intercourse with them. At least two of the members of the house declared in the course of the discussion that the citizens of the District wanted congress to assume the jurisdiction.[1] Again in the debate over the retrocession resolution five years later one of the speakers asserted that the files of congress would disclose "petitions signed by almost every person living within the district," favoring the assumption by congress,[2] which, if exaggerated in details, gives some notion of the impression left on at least one person of the public mind in the District on that question. It may be concluded that the measure would have received a majority vote of the people.

In the meantime a further contribution to the discussion was made by the author of a pamphlet that appeared anonymously.[3]

[1] Annals of Congress, 6th Cong., p. 992.

[2] The same, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 975, February, 1805.

[3] Enquiries into the necessity or expediency of assuming legislation over the District of Columbia. By a private citizen of the District. From the Cabinet Office.

The imprint is without date, but Mr. Woodward, in his essay No. 5, which is dated Jan. 15, 1801, states that since writing the previous number, which appeared in the *Intelligencer*, Dec. 31, 1800, he had seen this

The author, after an elaborate consideration of the question whether congress was bound to assume direct jurisdiction over the District, reached the conclusion that in the first place congress was not bound to assume, because the constitutional grant of power does not always impose the obligation to exercise that power. In the second place, the acceptance of the District and the removal of the seat of government did not amount to such assumption. As to the expediency of the exercise of this power, the writer laid emphasis on the fact that if such a course is pursued, the people of the District would be governed without being represented in the government.

The Lee bill was characterized as not only unnecessary but ruinous in its effects on the District. In the event congress decided to exercise its powers, the writer urged that a system of jurisprudence be provided and such arrangements made as would enable the people of the District to govern themselves. He claimed another consequence would follow assumption, namely, an increase of taxes, which the territory, in its present situation, would be unable to sustain.

While admitting the general conclusions reached by this writer, Mr. Woodward, in essay No. 5, which was devoted to a review of the pamphlet, asserted one of two consequences must result, "either the provision in the constitution must be abandoned or attended with insuperable difficulties in the execution and as at irreconcilable war with every principle of an American freeman, or a remedy must be provided." [1]

The remedy Mr. Woodward pointed out was federal representation and federal franchise for the citizens of the District and a competent local government. He spoke with scorn of an opinion held by some men in the District "that it is well enough for us to remain unrepresented in any way, as the federal government is intrusted with absolute sovereignty over

pamphlet, so that it may be inferred the publication was made the last of the year or early in the following year.

[1] Epaminondas on the government of the territory of the District of Columbia No. 5, being a review of a work on the same subject by a private citizen, Georgetown. Territory of Columbia, Green and English. 1801.

us and as we may repose a confidence that that sovereignty will never be abused." Such persons, in the opinion of Mr. Woodward, to obtain the advantages attendant on that situation, are willing to relinquish their inestimable privileges and to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. While the tide of discussion and controversy rose and fell in the District, congress apparently did not come within the range of the agitated movement.

The members were not obliged to read newspaper communications and pamphlets about the District situation; only two memorials had been received, and apparently the citizens had not become alive to the results in legislation due to personal acquaintance and personal influence with legislators. At any rate there is not a solitary reference in the discussions on District affairs during this closing session of the sixth congress nor during the following session of the seventh congress of a phase of the relations of the District to congress that was referred to at the very next session, the third held in the new city, as a reason for abandoning the entire territory in order to rid congress of the trouble and annoyance of exercising exclusive legislation.

Congress had by that time made the discovery, or at least some of the members, that all people in the District did not think alike and that there were a good many needs demanding legislative action. Besides, the affairs of their own districts or national questions were of more importance and interest than the local concerns of a constituency that was silent on election day. It was especially a cause of irritation to be compelled to take the place of arbiter in conflicting local interests.

After some three weeks of further consideration the committee of the house to which the District government question had been referred reported a territorial form of government which in the main followed the scheme already elaborated in the publications of Mr. Woodward. Instead, however, of establishing manhood suffrage, the right of voting and of holding office was confined to those who had real property. Provision was made for courts and for the appointment of sheriffs.

Unlike the Woodward plan, the house bill placed no qualification of residence in the District either upon the persons appointed by the president as governor or judges of the court, and this was looked upon by the memorialists of Alexandria as likely to result in having men placed over them "holding no permanent evidence of interest among them, perhaps under interests opposed to them." [1] The bill was printed in full in the *Intelligencer* of Jan. 30, and in the same issue appeared the first of two communications signed "Washington," the second number being printed in the issue of Feb. 2d. The writer opposed the legislation proposed by the committee on the ground that as the mass of real property in Washington was held but by a few, the voters would be few. As values of land in the county were less than in the three towns, owners of real estate were more numerous in the county districts. The consequence would be that the county would dominate the legislature. He asserted that jealousy already marked the relations of the city of Washington and the county. While the property of the city residents, he added, "is tributary to the coffers of Prince George County, these coffers are never open to her wants however imperious."

The citizens of Alexandria at a public meeting adopted resolutions that "the bill lately reported to congress for the government of the District is not calculated to produce any good effect to the people of the District and is an express contradiction to some of their most important rights." [2]

Objection was made to the proposed restriction of the suffrage, and it was stated that what was favored was an unrestricted enjoyment of that privilege.

When the District bill was taken up in the house on the 2d of February, an effort was made to postpone the consideration of the entire subject, on the ground mainly there was no neces-

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 9, 1801.

[2] The same, Feb. 6, 1801. Town meeting held Jan. 30. A committee consisting of Francis Peyton, Abraham Faw, Archibald McClean, John Love and Walter Jones, Jr., was appointed to prepare a memorial to congress which was presented in the house. Printed in full in the *Intelligencer* of Feb. 9, 1801.

sity of congress assuming further jurisdiction over the District at this time. However, this failing, the attack was directed against the features of the proposed territorial government, and the criticism was specially sharp that the people were not allowed to choose the governor and the judicial officers.

Attention was called to the fact that under the proposed system of government no citizen of the District would have a voice in the national government which he helped to support, "a denial of a natural right." On the other hand, it was declared the local interests would be better represented in the proposed legislature than could possibly be the case in similar bodies of the two states, and their affairs would be more carefully considered.

It was declared by one of the speakers, a Maryland representative, that the people of the District desired that assumption should take place and that they were satisfied with the features of the bill.

Owing to the opportunities afforded by their residence at the seat of government and their acquaintance with the members of congress, the speaker asserted, the voices of District citizens would be heard, even though they might not be represented in the national body. In the event provision for District representation in the national government should seem necessary, he added, by changing the constitution a delegate might be given to the District when the population became sufficient.

That the people of the District could not be represented in the general government was admitted by another speaker. But where was the blame, if any, to attach? Certainly not, he said, to the men who made the act of cession, nor to those who accepted it. It was the men who framed the constitutional provision, that set apart this as a District under national safeguard and government.

The next day when the consideration of the bill was resumed, an amendment was adopted extending the franchise privilege beyond the class of freeholders so as to include housekeepers with property valued at $100. But on the previous day the

house had voted down, by a majority of only two votes, a motion to extend the privilege of voting to persons who are not freeholders, which would have been unlimited suffrage.[1] Two more days were spent in the discussion of the bill, but the details of the debate have not been preserved. Then on Feb. 5, after the bill had been amended and reported to the house from the committee on the whole, a bill was received from the senate entitled "an act concerning the District of Columbia," and this was the bill which was later on adopted by the house without change and became a law on the 27th of February, 1801.

In the opinion of the editor of the organ of the Republican party, the *National Intelligencer*,[2] the bill proposed by the house committee, providing a territorial form of government for the District, "was perhaps the most extraordinary that the annals either of federal or state legislation present since the era of American independence. Under the specious mask of imitating the Constitution of the United States, it subverted the pillar of that instrument by limiting the right of suffrage and of being elected to office to citizens possessed of freehold property. It placed at the mercy of the executive magistrate, himself to be appointed by the President, the lives and property of the citizens by giving to him uncontrolled appointment of sheriffs. It imparted to the legislative body a continuance in office calculated to exalt it above all interference. It will not be surprising that such a bill received the vigorous opposition, in every stage, of the Republican side of the House, but it is surprising that its most pernicious provisions should receive the zealous support of a majority of the House, which demonstrates the extreme length to which party spirit, united with power, will go, even to the sacrifice of a vital principle of liberty.

[1] Such a policy as to the franchise so radical for that day justifies the inference that the advocates of unlimited white male suffrage, both in the house and among the memorialists of the citizens of Alexandria, were influenced more by the desire to obstruct legislation than to really bring about such a condition in the District.

[2] History of the last session of Congress printed in issue of April 22, 1801, with full abstract of the territorial bill.

"Notwithstanding the decided and persevering opposition given to this measure, it seemed likely to survive it, when the Senate agreed to a bill, which was sent to the House, passed on different principles and from different motives. This bill avoided the organization of a legislature, but prescribed the establishment of a court consisting of three judges to be appointed by the President and of a board of justices of the peace to whom the right of taxation and police was confided. To this system the federal side of the House was compelled, in despair of obtaining any other, reluctantly to submit, and it passed into a law."

The law of Feb. 27, 1801, which was the outcome of the first consideration given by congress to the affairs of the District, was without doubt disappointing. It was an unequal measure. The judicial system was all that the most extreme Federalist could ask, and was a notable recognition of the District as more than merely a local concern. But loading on the new territory the entire mass of the Virginia and Maryland laws was a makeshift, mischievous in its tendencies, awkward and at times absurd in its operations, while the provision for a local government was slight and inadequate. In these two latter respects the law was supposed to be only temporary, due to the lack of time in the short session and to the want of consideration, owing to the absorbing phases of the political upheaval which had just taken place.

As in all legislative action which shows the cleavage of strong party spirit, it was a compromise. The ruling party, the Federalist, then on the eve of giving up the reins of power which it had held for twelve years, was obliged to abandon in part at least its purpose of elevating the seat of government to a position that some, no doubt, hoped would ultimately be on a par with that of the states of the Union, while the Republican party fell back from the position that congress should go no further in its assumption of its constitutional power over the District than that of the law of 1790, and that the legislative authority of the states should be continued within the District.

The new law embodied the same principle as the bill first reported by the house committee. In both instances the existing laws of Virginia and Maryland were continued in operation and the further legislative authority of the states within the District was ended. The direct control of the federal government was established by both measures, while the new law divided the territory into two counties separated by the Potomac, provided a circuit court with all the powers of United States circuit courts, an orphan court and register of wills for each county, a marshal, district attorney and justices of the peace. The clerks of the circuit court were empowered to record deeds.

The corporate powers of Georgetown and Alexandria were continued, but the hustings court of Alexandria and the mayor's court of Georgetown were abolished and their functions vested in the circuit court. With the exception of the three circuit court judges whose salaries were directed to be paid from the United States treasury, as also witness fees in exact imitation in this as in other particulars of the United States courts, all the officials created were to depend on fees for their compensation.

In general it may be said that after providing a court similar to the circuit courts of the country, congress merely adopted bodily the governmental machinery of the locality along with the laws, but placed the power of appointing all officials in the president of the United States with the advice and consent of the senate — another recognition of the national character of the District.[1]

President Adams was obliged to act promptly, if these appointments were to be made from the ranks of his own party. He

[1] Under the Maryland law the orphans' court in each county had three judges selected from the justices of the peace. The court as constituted by the law of 1801 continued its separate existence until 1870, when its functions were transferred to one of the justices of the supreme court of the District holding a special term. The code of laws adopted in 1900 substituted a probate court with jurisdiction over wills and divorces. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 3. Orphans' Court and Register of Wills. William H. Dennis.

signed the bill, Friday, Feb. 27, so that only four days, including Sunday, remained, before his term expired. The day after he affixed his signature to the act, he sent to the senate the following nominations: Thomas Johnson of Frederick, Md., to be chief judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia; James Marshall of Alexandria, and William Cranch of Washington, associate judges; Thomas Swann of Alexandria to be attorney for the District of Columbia; and James M. Lingan to be marshal.

The president also named the three judges and the attorney for the District to be justices of the peace in both counties.[1]

All these nominations were confirmed the following Tuesday (March 3), the last day of the session, except "the three judges and attorney to be justices of the peace," and action on them was postponed.[2] Instead, the senate confirmed a list of twenty-three persons to be justices of the peace for Washington County and nineteen for Alexandria County which had come from the president the day (Sunday only intervening) after he had made the first nominations for those places. It probably occurred to the president that combining two offices, and especially of a judicial nature, in one set of officials was not likely to be productive of happy results. In addition he had before him an act supplementary to the law of February 27, which he approved March 3, correcting what was apparently an oversight in the previous law. For while that measure adopted for the District the system current in Maryland and Virginia of justices of the peace as individual magistrates, no provision was made for a levy court, which in Maryland had a membership of seven appointed by the governor of the state from the justices of the peace. The later act provided for a board of commissioners or levy court in each county to be composed of the justices of the peace of the respective jurisdictions and with the same powers as possessed by the Maryland levy courts, thus providing for these minor governmental agencies one set

[1] Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate, Vol. 1, p. 387. Washington. Duff Green. 1828.

[2] The same.

of laws instead of those of two states.[1] Such a function of the Maryland county court as the granting of liquor licenses outside of the towns was vested in the circuit court of the District, but the revenue from that source was to be expended for the benefit of the two counties by the levy court. The appointment of constables, inspectors of flour, tobacco, highways and ferries was vested in the circuit court.

The same day the District judicial nominations were confirmed — and it was the last day of the life of the congress — the following additional nominations were also confirmed: William Hammond Dorsey, judge of the orphans' court, Washington County; John Peter, register of wills, Washington County; John Herbert, judge of the orphans' court, Alexandria County; Cleon Moore, register of wills, Alexandria County.

It is interesting to note that the Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the senate shows that after Feb. 24, 1801, seven working days before the end of the congress, only three judicial appointments were confirmed in addition to the District appointments. The sixteen judges of the United States created by the law of Feb. 13, 1801, were confirmed by the senate by the 20th of February. This lot of appointments was nicknamed by the Republicans the Duke of Braintree's Midnight Judges. It is quite evident, if, as is stated, it was "almost twelve o'clock [March 3] when these commissions were signed,"[2] that such a congestion was due either to pressure of work at the state department or to demands upon the president's time that made it impossible for him to give this detail attention at an earlier date. As the entire batch of the District judicial appointments, numbering in all, including the justices of the peace, forty-nine, were confirmed on the last

[1] This provision for the levy courts of the two counties did not affect the powers of the justices of the peace, who continued as magistrates to administer in the respective counties the laws of Maryland and Virginia. Unlike the judges of the circuit court, who also had two sets of law to administer, the magistrates were limited to the single jurisdiction of the county in which they were appointed to serve.

[2] McMaster's History, Vol. 2, p. 532.

day of the session and the commissions were duly made out and signed the same day, it would appear that after all it was the District cases that caused President Adams to devote the closing hours of his administration to signing his name.

Early on the morning of March 4, Mr. Adams entered his carriage and left the city for his home,[1] while the quiet of that hour was broken by the thunder of the salute given by the Washington artillery which ushered in the ceremonies of the first inauguration of a president in the city of Washington.[2] About ten o'clock the chronicler of the day relates, the Alexandria company of riflemen, with the Washington artillery company, paraded in front of the president elect's lodgings at Conrad and McMunn's boarding house at the northwest corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. W. The city "presented a spectacle of uncommon animation occasioned by the addition to its usual population of a large body of citizens from the adjacent districts."[3] At twelve o'clock the president elect, attended by a number of citizens, walked to the capitol, and his entrance into that building was announced by a volley from the Washington company of artillery. He came into the senate chamber attended by the heads of the executive departments and the marshal of the District of Columbia.[4]

After the delivery of the inaugural, the oath of office was administered and the ceremonies of an eventful day were over. And so were the strain and stress of the uncertainty of the factional struggle in the house as to which of the two names on the Republican ticket should be given the first place. The contest had held the attention of the country, and that fact as well as the prospects offered on the change in the administration served, no doubt, to attract an unusual number of spectators. "The senate chamber was so crowded," writes an eye-witness, "that I believe not another creature could enter. On one side

[1] McMaster's History, Vol. 2, p. 532.
[2] The *Aurora*, March 11, 1801.
[3] The same.
[4] Journal of Executive Proceedings of the Senate, Vol. 1.

of the house the senate sat, the other was resigned by the representatives to the ladies." [1]

As the throng left the building, printed copies of the address which they had just heard, were ready for distribution, having been struck off at the office of the *National Intelligencer* from a copy which was furnished the editor that morning by Mr. Jefferson.[2] The president returned to his lodgings, where he made his home until the 19th of March, when he went to the president's house.[3]

In this interval such of the furniture in the president's house as had been brought from Philadelphia, and was worn out, was replaced with new, and an attempt made to finish the building. As early as Feb. 23, 1801, the commissioners had directed the East Room, then being finished, to be cleared of shavings, but in spite of the additional work, the building was still in an unfinished state when the new president took possession. The principal stairway had not been built, and the East Room and some of the rooms upstairs were not plastered. He began at once to fulfil the social duties of the place, although he was alone, as his daughters did not spend much time in Washington until the following season. Each day he had a company at dinner which was limited to twelve.[4]

But the political opponents of the new administration did not neglect the very obvious opportunity thus afforded of conveying the impression that the great tribune of the common people was living in a species of regal splendor. A writer of a satirical turn of mind enumerated the blessings that would flow from the administration of Mr. Jefferson, due to the saving of public money.[5]

[1] The First Forty Years of Washington Society. Letter of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith, p. 26.

[2] The same.

[3] *National Intelligencer*, March 20, 1801.

[4] Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 28. Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith in a letter dated May 26, 1801, a couple of months after Mr. Jefferson moved to the president's house, stated she dined there and that he had company every day.

[5] *Alexandria Advertiser*, May 25, 1801. Reprinted from the *Washington Federalist.*

As a case in point, he states that "the great stone house, big enough for two emperors, one pope and the grand lama in the bargain," is to be the home also of Mr. Madison, the secretary of state, and Mr. Gallatin, the secretary of the treasury. Where the people are to be benefited by this arrangement, the writer was careful to point out, is that both will pay rent to the president, who will put the money into the treasury. "That is republican and economical." [1] By the following fall Mr. Madison had taken the house on the site of 1333–1335 F Street, which he occupied until he was elected president.[2] Henry Dearborn, the secretary of war, occupied one of the houses near the capitol erected by General Washington.[3] When the Fourth of July came around, the president's house was the centre of the celebration of the day, and the occasion was the more notable as it was the first public reception given in that historic structure. The company came together at twelve o'clock and were received by the president. In the dining room were four large sideboards, where the visitors that numbered about one hundred were invited to help themselves to the cake of various kinds and the wine and punch supplied in profusion. In an adjoining room the marine band played patriotic airs, having accompanied the marine corps under the command of Colonel Burrows, the commandant, to the president's house.[4]

Other features of the celebration of the day was the firing of a salute by the Washington Light Artillery Company, after which

[1] This rather clever take-off of the democracy of the new administration was no doubt suggested by the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Madison lived for a time at the president's house, as stated by Mrs. Smith in a letter dated May 26, 1801 (First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 28). In the same letter Mrs. Smith also states that the Madisons had taken a house "three miles distant from us." This had reference to a house on the north side of M Street a short distance west of Wisconsin Avenue. Here they had in the spring of 1801 as neighbors the secretary of the treasury, Mr. Gallatin, and Mrs. Gallatin. The latter had moved there from Capitol Hill.

[2] Liber G, folio 415. Recorder of Deeds office.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 23, 1801.

[4] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 30.

the soldiers had dinner "at the spring of Rock Creek."[1] A dinner attended by the civil and military officers of the government and citizens was given at McMunn and Conrad's, and as Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith states she was present, it is evident that both sexes participated in that festivity.

Announcement was made that a discourse appropriate to the occasion would be delivered in the chamber of the house of representatives by Rev. David Austin.[2] The public was also informed that a collection would be taken for the benefit of the religious services being held at the hotel in an apartment styled "Lady Washington's Chappel, at which place instructions will be given of the progress of national operations as sketched down in Holy Writ." The chapel was dedicated some ten days later,[3] but as there is no further reference to this new church, which probably occupied the room in the Great Hotel that had been used the previous year by the theatre company, it may be concluded the Rev. Mr. Austin and his views on the immediate second coming of Christ did not succeed in gaining a following in the city of Washington. In the previous fall he had been a candidate for one of the positions of chaplain of congress, and is referred to in a satirical rhymed effusion that appeared anonymously the following fall.[4] Later on Mr. Austin gave notice that subscriptions would be received "for the publication of two discourses delivered at the Treasury Office," but as the sermons were not printed, it is evident that his appeal failed to elicit an adequate response. However, probably the substance of his proposed publication eventually got into print.[5] Mr. Austin also endeavored during

[1] *Museum*, July 8, 1801. [2] *Intelligencer*, June 29, 1801.

[3] *Alexandria Advertiser*, July 14, 1801. An outline of the sermon delivered on this occasion is printed. There are three main heads in the discourse, the first having seven divisions, the second six and the third, five.

[4] The Clerical Candidates, a poem. Washington City, Nov. 14, 1801. 32 pp., 8°. As it was advertised to be for sale at the *Museum* office, it may be concluded that it was a product of that press. *Museum*, Dec. 2, 1801.

[5] The National Barley Cake or the Rock of Offense, etc., by David Austin, A.M., Washington, District of Columbia. Way and Groff,

his brief stay in the city to induce congress to erect a structure which could be used by all denominations for public worship, but beyond sending a petition to the national legislature, nothing further was done.[1] While discourses on the immediate second coming of Christ were evidently not in demand in the District, the same could not be said of a discussion or rather a defence of infant baptism. For in a couple of months after an advertisement appeared inviting subscriptions for "a series of letters" on that subject "addressed to Rev. Adam Freeman, a minister of the Baptist church, by Rev. Stephen Bloomer Balch, A.M., pastor of the Presbyterian church, Georgetown," the publication appeared.[2]

At that period the Baptist denomination was not represented in the District by an organized church. It is apparent that Rev. Mr. Freeman, who had drawn the controversial fire of Dr. Balch, had been preaching in this locality, and it is also apparent that his work was continued. In the *Museum* of July 1, 1801, after the announcement of Dr. Balch, was a notice that "Rev. Mr. Richards of the Baptist church of Baltimore will preach in the Treasury Office next Sunday."

Seven months later (March 7, 1802), "The Baptist church of Washington City" was organized, which came to be known later as the First Baptist Church, and which name it bears to this day.[3]

North E Street, Jan. 14, A.D. 1802. Issues of the District of Columbia Press in 1800–1802, p. 58. A. P. C. Griffin. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 4. Mr. Griffin states Mr. Austin was dismissed from the Presbyterian church in 1797 for ventilating his Adventist notions and that his biographers record, that "after recovering from his delusions" he was installed in the year 1815 as pastor in Bozrah, Conn.

[1] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., 1801–1802, p. 1119.

[2] *Museum*, June 15 and Aug. 14, 1801.

[3] An account of the organization of the church was printed in the *National Intelligencer*, March 10, 1802, which stated that Revs. Jeremiah Moore, Lewis Richards, Adam Freeman and William Parkinson, ministers of the Baptist church, met, and after a sermon by Rev. Mr. Moore constituted the church.

Six persons were the constituent members, Charles P. Polk, Cephas Fox, Charles Rogers, John Buckner, Joseph Borrows and Sarah Borrows.

By the following fall a church building was erected at the southwest corner of 19th and I streets, N. W., where the home of the congregation was located for a good many years. Rev. William Parkinson, who was the chaplain of the house, served as pastor during the early period.[1]

An attempt to revive interest in the ancient German church in Georgetown was made at this time, but as there are no further references to the matter, it may be concluded no results followed.[2]

As soon as the building of the war office was available and it was occupied by the state, war and navy departments, the latter part of April, 1801,[3] the hall or corridor was utilized for Sunday religious services. Here each Sunday afternoon Rev. Mr. McCormick, the rector of Washington Parish, conducted services.[4]

Jefferson, early in his administration, had his attention turned to the affairs of the District, and it was not distasteful to him, for he had been for many years deeply interested in the new seat of government and had given much time and thought to its administration. The first subject of District interest that claimed his attention was the appointment of officials under the law of Feb. 27, 1801. Although all officials thus authorized had been appointed by his successor, confirmed by the senate and their commissions signed and sealed, yet as this was done in the closing hours of the last administration, the commissions had not been delivered.

Mr. Jefferson proceeded on the theory that these administrative acts were not final necessarily, and while he issued the majority of the executed commissions, yet in quite a number of cases he withheld them and made entirely new appointments.

[1] History of the Baptist Institutions of Washington City. Andrew Rothwell, Washington, 1867.

[2] A discourse in the German language will be delivered by Rev. Mr. Melshirmer of Hanover, York County, on Sunday next at 10 A.M. at the German church in Georgetown and at 3 P.M. at the Treasury Department in the city. *Georgetown Museum*, Oct. 16, 1801.

[3] Commissioners' Letter Book.

[4] *Intelligencer*, May 15, 1801.

The United States Supreme Court, in the only case brought before it (Marbury *vs.* Madison, 1 Cranch, 158), held that the complainants had a right to the commissions, but were not entitled to a mandamus, the remedy asked for, because the law conferring on the supreme court the right to issue such a mandamus was unconstitutional, the first judicial assertion of the supremacy of the constitution over laws repugnant to that instrument. Jefferson characterized this decision as a judicial veto.

The first District appointments made by Jefferson were those of justices of the peace on March 16, 1801.[1] In sending these names, together with other recess appointments, to the senate for confirmation, Jan. 6, 1802, the president explained that the nominations of justices of the peace made by his predecessor "having been thought too numerous," a commission was issued to fourteen of those nominated for Washington County and "to one other, to wit, Thomas Corcoran . . . and to eleven of those nominated for Alexandria County." [2]

But in December, 1801, mandamus proceedings were begun in the United States Supreme Court by four men whose names had been dropped. One of the complainants was William Marbury, who served under the Adams administration as purchasing agent at the Washington navy yard, and the three others were William Harper, Robert T. Hooe and Dennis Ramsay, all of Alexandria. Charles Lee, the late attorney-general of the United States, and then a member of the District bar, was their counsel. In consequence, no doubt, of the legal proceedings, the senate postponed action on the nominations, and they were not confirmed until the last of April, 1802, more than a year after the confirmation of the Adams appointees.

No further effort was made by any of the Adams men to secure the offices which were just within their grasp. In addi-

[1] List of justices of the peace from 1801 to 1901. In History of the Office of Justice of the Peace. Charles S. Bundy. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 5.

[2] Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate, Vol. 1, p. 400. The Adams nominations for Washington County numbered twenty-three, and for Alexandria County, nineteen.

tion to those named as justices of the peace, there were several District men to whom Mr. Jefferson referred in sending new names to the senate "as nominated but not appointed."

In this class was James M. Lingan, who had been named as marshal of the District, and who served in that capacity at the Jefferson inauguration. At that time he was occupying the office of collector of the port of Georgetown, having been appointed by President Washington, March 21, 1791, when the office was created. He resigned the collectorship in October, 1801, and John Oakley, was appointed in his stead. But little is known of the further career of Mr. Lingan until his tragic death in the anti-federal riots in Baltimore in the year 1812. He was born in Maryland in the vicinity of the District. As a young man he was a clerk in a store in Georgetown, probably connected in a business way later on with Uriah Forrest, who was his brother-in-law. He served in the revolutionary war and languished for some time in one of the British prison ships.[1]

Daniel Carroll Brent, a nephew of Daniel Carroll, the commissioner, was appointed marshal by Jefferson in place of Lingan. He was early identified with District affairs, as he was interested in the stone quarries at Acquia, Va., which were leased by the commissioners from his uncle George Brent, who was part owner. The new marshal's brother, Robert Brent, also had an interest in the same property. Robert Brent, who had just been named a justice of the peace for Washington County, was born in Acquia in 1764 and was married in 1787 to the eldest daughter of Notley Young and lived with his father-in-law in Washington. William Brent, also a brother, was in the employ of the board of commissioners from an early date, resigning May, 1801, although he was given occasional employment after that date.[2]

John Thompson Mason received from the president the appointment to the office of attorney for the District, instead of

[1] Sketch of James M. Lingan. Ella Lorraine Dorsey. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 13.

[2] Robert Brent, first mayor of Washington. J. D. Morgan. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2, Proceedings of Commissioners, July 1, 1801.

Thomas Swann, as early as March 25, 1801, when the appointment of Mr. Brent was also announced in the *Intelligencer*.

Other changes were the appointment of George Gilpin, judge of the orphans' court of Alexandria, in place of John Herbert named by Adams, while John Hewitt was made register of wills for Washington County, instead of John Peter, whom Adams had selected.

The most important appointment made by President Jefferson was that of William Kilty as chief judge of the circuit court of the District, who was named in place of Thomas Johnson, who declined to serve.[1] The new chief justice, or chief judge as the term was then, had just finished a collection of the laws of Maryland, a work undertaken by appointment of the state legislature. He was then forty-four years of age, and was born in England. He served in the revolutionary war as surgeon, and at the close of that struggle studied law at Annapolis. After a service of nearly five years in the court of the District, he was appointed chancellor of Maryland and held that position up to the time of his death, Oct. 10, 1821.

His associates on the bench, who had been appointed by Adams, were James Marshall of Alexandria, a brother of John Marshall, who at the February term of that year of the United States Supreme Court had taken his seat for the first time as chief justice. James Marshall had served in the revolutionary war, had been in France during the reign of terror as commercial agent of New York, Boston and Charleston, and was the agent of the United States in negotiating the release of Lafayette. He was born in Farquier County, Va., and at the time of this appointment was thirty-seven years of age. In 1795 he married a daughter of Robert Morris.[2]

[1] In the *National Intelligencer* of March 25, 1801, this appointment, made March 23, 1801, was announced.

[2] In The Marshall Family, by William M. Paxton, Cincinnati, his name appears as James Markham Marshall, and he is said to have been one of Adams's midnight judges. He was the only one of the name of Marshall in the entire list of judicial appointments made by Adams, and it is concluded that James Marshall of Alexandria, named as one of the District judges, is the James M. Marshall mentioned by Mr. Paxton and other biographers.

William Cranch, the other associate judge, since the collapse of the affairs of Morris, Greenleaf and Nicholson, whom he represented in Washington, had practised law in the new city. At this time he had completed a service of seven weeks as a member of the board of commissioners of the city.[1]

The circuit court met for the first time on the 23d of March, 1801, occupying a room adjoining the senate chamber on the south, which had been assigned for the use of the United States Supreme Court.[2]

An organization of the court was completed by the appointment of Uriah Forrest, clerk of the court for Washington County, and George Deneale, clerk of the court for Alexandria County, who had been clerk of the hustings court of Alexandria.[3]

Mr. Forrest, who had gained the rank of general in the revolutionary army, had returned to Georgetown at the close of the war and formed a partnership with Benjamin Stoddert, and carried on a large commercial business. In the year 1790, the partners purchased a tract of 990 acres lying to the north of Georgetown between Wisconsin Avenue and Rock Creek. In 1794 Mr. Forrest acquired Mr. Stoddert's interest and became the sole owner of the tract, which was called Rosedale. In that year he erected a frame house on the north side of Ordway Street a short distance east of Wisconsin Avenue, which is still standing and still in the possession of his descendants. Here he was living when he received the appointment as clerk. A short time before, he sold to his brother-in-law Philip Barton Key, 250 acres of the Rosedale tract, which Mr. Key named Woodley. Mr. Key, who practised law in the District up to the year 1806, when he transferred his business in the District to his nephew, Francis Scott Key, built a house on the south side of Woodley

[1] Mr. Cranch was appointed by President Adams, Jan. 8, 1801, to fill the vacancy caused by the death, Dec. 25, 1800, of Gustavus Scott, who had served since Aug. 23, 1794. Mr. Cranch resigned March 3, 1801.

[2] *Intelligencer*, March 25, 1801. The *Museum*, March 27, 1801. Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 25.

[3] Cranch Circuit Court Reports, Vol. 1, p. 34. Mr. Deneale was also lieutenant colonel of the 106th regiment of Virginia militia.

Road, still standing, and between 30th and 31st streets, where he lived, except during the summer, until his death in the year 1817.[1] Mr. Key was acting as the legal representative of the commissioners, when in February, 1801, he was appointed by President Adams chief judge of the United States circuit court in Maryland, which office congress at the following session abolished when the new system of courts was done away with.

The clerks of the circuit court were required by the law of March 3, 1801, to record deeds, thus legislating out of office the clerk who, under the law passed by the Maryland legislature, had performed that duty for the property owners in that portion of the District. This place had been held from the beginning by John M. Gantt.[2]

The clerks' office for Washington County was located during the first months in a house on the south side of F Street and presumably at the southeast corner of 15th and F streets, or just east of the corner.[3] In the spring of 1802 the office was removed to the Seven Buildings, Pennsylvania Avenue, between 19th and 20th streets,[4] and in the fall of the following year, still another change was made which placed the office west of Washington Circle on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 23d and 24th streets.[5]

On the second Tuesday of April, 1801, the orphans' court, William Hammond Dorsey, judge, convened in "the house of William Rhodes," which was the tavern at the northeast corner of 15th and F streets, N. W.[6]

[1] Pictures of the City of Washington in the Past, pp. 160–161. Samuel C. Busey, Washington, 1898, *Intelligencer*, Dec. 23, 1805. Statement of Mr. Key claiming to be a citizen of Maryland. Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 1st Sess., January, 1808, p. 1489.

[2] At this initial session of the court the following were admitted as attorneys: John T. Mason, R. W. Peacock, A. B. Woodward, John M. Gantt, James S. Morsell, Charles Simmes, Elias B. Caldwell, A. C. Magruder, John Hewitt, Henry Moore and Daniel Clarke. *Museum*, March 27, 1801.

[3] *Museum*, March 27, 1801.

[4] *Intelligencer*, May 10, 1802.

[5] Same, Sept. 26, 1803.

[6] Same, April 8, 1801. The notice was signed "by order of John Hewitt, register."

## CHAPTER XVI

### USE OF DISTRICT PATRONAGE

In providing a place on the board of city commissioners for William Cranch, who was struggling to maintain himself by a law practice in the infant city, President Adams not only secured to the city the services of an able man, but also was of assistance to a relative by marriage. As soon as the circuit court judgeships of the District were created, Mr. Adams advanced Mr. Cranch to one of the places, and then the way was open to assist an old friend and a one-time prominent Massachusetts citizen, by appointing Tristam Dalton to succeed Mr. Cranch. Mr. Dalton was at that time in reduced circumstances, having lost heavily in the failure of Lear and Co.[1] But early in the year 1801, before Mr. Dalton came on the board, a full report of what the commissioners had done — with the dominant note, so familiar, of lack of funds — had been sent to congress by the president. What the commissioners wanted to know was, whether the city lots should be forced to a sale, whatever the state of the market, in order that the instalments of the Maryland loans be paid as they became due.[2] The commissioners also furnished information of a similar character to the chairman of the house committee to which the affairs of the city had been referred.[3] A few weeks later the report of the committee was laid before the house.[4]

It was found that all together the commissioners had spent a little more than a million of dollars in providing a place for the national government, and referring to a previous report, the com-

[1] The principal in that concern and also a heavy loser, Tobias Lear, was about the same time provided for by President Jefferson, who appointed him commercial agent at St. Domingo.

[2] American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 219, report to the president.

[3] Proceedings of Commissioners, Feb. 6, 1801.

[4] American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 243, Feb. 27, 1801.

mittee stated that of this amount $360,000 was unpaid, while on the contrary there were $144,000 in debts due the city. Of the 10,000 lots comprising the original public holdings 4682 remained unsold, and according to the estimated value placed on them by the commissioners, based on the prices obtained by individuals for lots, they were worth $875,000.[1] The committee was rather doubtful about this estimate of the value of the public property and was of the opinion that reliance could not be placed upon money from such a source to complete what was necessary for the accommodation of the government. The committee recommended, apparently entirely in the interests of economy, that the board of commissioners be abolished and its business transferred to the treasury department, in order, as the report stated, that the expenses of the board might be saved.

A few days after the report had been submitted, the sixth congress came to an end without making any provision for the new district except as found in the law of Feb. 27, 1801, and the supplemental act. As a consequence, the commissioners were obliged, in accordance with existing law, to continue the sale of the public lots in a rapidly falling market. No less than two public sales, each continued for several days, were held during the year 1801.

This serious phase of the situation was called to the attention of congress by the commissioners early at the opening of the seventh congress.[2] President Jefferson, in forwarding the report, suggested that in view of the state of the market for city property it would be wise to advance money from the treasury to be refunded when sales were eventually made.

[1] In the fall of 1801 the commissioners wrote to the following persons whom it may be inferred were the principal landholders at that time, asking to be furnished with lists of lots sold by them: Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Notley Young, Thomas Law, James Barry, George Walker, John Templeman, Samuel Davidson, estate of Gustavus Scott, estate of David Burnes, Thomas Tingey, Walter Hellen, Robert Peter, Wm. Prout, Samuel Blodgett, Wm. H. Dorsey, James M. Lingan, Benj. Stoddert, and Uriah Forrest. Commissioners' Letter Book, Oct. 9, 1801.

[2] American State Papers, Miscela., Vol. 1, p. 254, Jan. 11, 1802.

This course was followed by congress by the device of authorizing the sale of public lots to pay the Maryland loans, provided it could be done, in the opinion of the president, "without an unwarrantable sacrifice of the public property." [1]

As the sequel proved, practically the entire amount of the Maryland loans was repaid directly from the treasury. The law which was framed on the lines laid down in the report made by a committee to the house, Feb. 12, 1802,[2] also provided that after June 1, 1802, the board of commissioners should cease to exist and that the affairs of the city, heretofore under its care, be placed under the direction of a superintendent to be appointed by the president.

On the 4th of June Thomas Munroe, for many years the clerk of the board, was appointed superintendent of the city, a position which he held for fourteen years.

As required by law the accounts of the commissioners were adjusted for settlement by the accounting officer of the treasury department, but owing to the lack of some of the vouchers, no final settlement was made. The cash in hand, amounting to $110.59, was turned over to the superintendent.[3]

The former clerk found himself clothed with the powers of the board of city commissioners, but evidently did not consider he had the right to pay himself a salary, nor indeed to

[1] An act to abolish the board of commissioners, May 1, 1802.

[2] American State Papers, Miscela., Vol. 1, p. 260.

[3] Letter of the comptroller of the treasury, giving statement of accounts which have remained more than three years unsettled, Dec. 11, 1810.

Gustavus Scott and other late commissioners of the city of Washington, $100,000.

Remarks. Advanced on account of the city accounts in the auditor's office. Vouchers defective.

Another entry of interest is, John Adams, late president of the United States, for the accommodation of his household, $12,898. Remarks. Advanced to him for the accommodation of the household of the president. Mr. Adams has forwarded a certificate that the money was expended according to law. But this not being such a voucher as is admissible at the treasury, the balance remains on the books. Also report of a house committee in relation to the sale of public lots. 18th Cong., 2d Sess., No. 90, Feb. 28, 1825.

Robert King, Sr., and his son Robert King, Jr., the former of whom had been employed as surveyor since the fall of 1797. Mr. King, Sr., however, continued in the service a little more than two months after the new law went into effect, when he returned to England accompanied by Robert King. Mr. Munroe was left alone to represent the government interests in the city. The following year congress, in providing a salary for the superintendent to date back six months to the time of his appointment made provision for his office expenses and created the office of surveyor of the city with a per diem pay of $3. All these expenses the law provided were to be paid from "the city fund," as the receipts from the sale of lots were termed.[1] A personal interest was shown by President Jefferson in the management of city affairs. It is recorded that the president, "having communicated personally with the board at this office," [2] directed that Pennsylvania Avenue, from the president's house to the M Street bridge should be completed, and also New Jersey Avenue, from the bridge over a tributary of St. James Creek between D and E streets to the capitol. It is also suggestive to find in the same record the entry of an order directing that a foot-path be made, as requested by James Sheafe, a member of the house from New Hampshire. Also at the same period the city funds were taxed for the cost of a foot-path from the residence of Samuel Dexter, secretary of the treasury, on K Street between 25th and 26th streets, to the footway on Pennsylvania Avenue, just west of Washington Circle.[3] An application, evidently

[1] United States Stats., Vol. 2, p. 235. March 3, 1803. Nicholas King was appointed by the superintendent the first surveyor of the city, although the superintendent in a letter dated Aug. 13, 1802, makes use of that title in speaking of Robert King, Sr. (Pot. Flats Case, Testimony, p. 1528.) He held the position until May, 1812. His duties were not defined until the act of Jan. 12, 1809, when he was given charge of the subdivision of lots and authority to fix the building line. Six years later an officer, termed also surveyor of the city, was created by a city ordinance of Aug. 3, 1815, which provided that the new official should "lay down, point out and mark the line and gradation of any street or avenue." There was no clash of authority, however, as the city and federal authorities appointed Latrobe surveyor of the city.

[2] Proceedings of the Commissioners, Oct. 13, 1801.

[3] The same, Jan. 30, 1801.

from citizens who sought to have the money derived from the sale of lots used in improving F Street from the President's Square to 11th Street, thence to Pennsylvania Avenue; also E Street from 11th to 8th and thence to Pennsylvania Avenue, was rejected by the commissioners because it would be a use of public money "for specific rather than general benefits," which would seem to indicate that in the minds of the commissioners when a government official desired a walk to his residence, that was of benefit to the entire community, while the improvement of streets for citizens was only a specific benefit.[1]

During the closing month of 1801 the first official street lighting was proposed when lamps were directed to be placed at the New Jersey Avenue bridge, at A Street, N., and near the capitol, and "one on a tree near the turn from the capitol into Pennsylvania Avenue," and one near the M Street bridge.[2]

Under the direction of the commissioners a further effort was made at this time to clear off the grounds about the president's house. This was done during the summer of 1801, and a post and rail fence, six rails high, was ordered to be built. The frame buildings and sheds used as workshops and for the storing of material, were removed. It was on the President's Square that the first market house in the city stood, and when in the summer of 1801 the citizens started a movement to erect a market house on Market Square on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 7th and 9th streets, the commissioners at first agreed to help on the good work by subscribing $500 towards the building fund.[3] But evidently the popular subscriptions did not warrant such an ambitious scheme, although Dr. Thornton acted as chairman of the meeting of citizens and William Brent was the treasurer and James Hoban and Clot-

[1] Commissioners' Letter Book, Oct. 15, 1801, commissioners to the president. The previous spring a committee was appointed at a meeting of property holders and residents of F Street and instructed to raise by subscription $400 to improve the street, but evidently the committee failed to get the money, and so subsequently an appeal was made to the commissioners. *Intelligencer*, April 1, 1801.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Dec. 18, 1801.

[3] The same, July 31, 1801.

worthy Stephenson were constituted a building committee.[1] Finally the commissioners proposed that if the expenses of removal were paid by the subscribers they would give "the old market house" on the President's Square as a temporary aid to the market.[2]

On a subsequent date, James Hoban was authorized "to remove the public sheds from the President's Square to the Market Square." By the middle of December, on Tuesday the 15th, the market was opened and also on the following Thursday and Saturday which are the market days at the present time. The place soon received the name of centre market which it bears to this day.[3] Some two months after the close of the first session of congress in the new city, James Hoban was directed by the commissioners to submit estimates of the cost of erecting "a temporary building on the elliptic foundations in the south wing of the Capitol for the accommodation of the representatives of the United States."[4]

On the 20th of June, 1801, a contract was made for the erection of a brick structure, elliptic in shape 70 × 94 feet. It was completed in November and occupied by the house on the assembling of the first session of the seventh congress. A covered passage connected the new chamber of the house with the senate chamber. It is quite evident from the promptness with which such a temporary provision was made that the room in the north wing where the first session of the house in the new city was held was not well adapted for such uses.[5]

The expenditures for city improvements from the funds of the commissioners were supplemented in a more liberal manner by the levy court or board of magistrates of Washington County than was the case with their predecessors of Prince George County. It is evident the justices of the peace of the new county

[1] *Intelligencer*, July 15, 1801.

[2] Proceedings of Commissioners, Aug. 29, 1801.

[3] *Museum*, Dec. 11, 1801. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 18 and 26, 1801. Corp. law to establish markets, Oct. 6, 1802.

[4] Proceedings of Commissioners, May 27, 1801.

[5] The contract price for building the "Oven," as it came to be known, was $4789. Proceedings of Commissioners, June 20, 1801.

organized shortly after the appointments had been made, for by September the assessment of the real estate had been completed. Washington Boyd, a native of the District and formerly in the surveying department of the city, was appointed collector at a meeting of the board which was held at the capitol at which time property owners were notified that those dissatisfied with the valuations would be heard.[1] Mr. Boyd gave public notice of the days he would be in Georgetown and Washington when he hoped all concerned will call and pay their taxes, as he assured them the small commissions on the small amount of tax which he has to collect will not compensate him for the trouble of calling on each individual.[2] The first protest against the form of government provided for the two District counties came from no less a source than the grand jury of Alexandria County, which presented as a grievance "certain powers vested in and emoluments granted to the levy court" of that county.[3] In addition to objecting to the justices of the peace drawing $2 per day for their services without limiting the times of sitting, the grand jury protested against their taxing "the people without possessing their general suffrage."

As the records of the levy court have not been preserved it is impossible to trace with any degree of accuracy the part Washington County court played at this period in the material development of the city. At least the repair and maintenance of the bridges in the city were paid from the funds under its control derived from taxes on real estate and from liquor and other licenses.[4] A rather interesting item of expenditure on the part of the court was the purchase from the commissioners for $400 of the frame building on judiciary square that had been used for a hospital for the workmen employed on the public buildings. It was to be used as a poor house or hospital, and Robert Brent, who represented the levy court in this transaction, was notified the building was sold "subject to be removed

[1] *Museum*, Sept. 11, 1801.
[2] The same, Nov. 23, 1801.
[3] *Washington Federalist*, Jan. 25, 1802.
[4] The *Museum*, Sept. 11, 1801. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 30, 1801.

by order of the Government at any time." [1] A curious instance of the blending of governmental agencies in the city at this period is found in the activity in levy court business of William Thornton, a member of that body, and also of the board of city commissioners. In the meantime the marshal of the District, Daniel C. Brent, had employed a man to take charge of the jail, which as far as can be judged from the scanty records, was the building used for that purpose by the levy court of Prince George County, and located on the north side of C Street, just east of 6th Street, N. W. The prison bars and walls were evidently not very secure, for very early the marshal gave notice of "the escape from the prison of Washington County in the city of Washington of three men." [2]

For serving the warrants of the justices and for the arrest of offenders, the services of constables were employed and such officials were appointed by the circuit court.[3]

The circuit court held its second session at Alexandria on the second Monday in April (the 13th instant) as provided in the organic act, the first session having been held in Washington the fourth Monday in March (the 23d instant).[4] A grand jury was formed, and in his charge to that body, the chief judge, William Kilty, gave a sketch of the laws by which the District was formed; and it may be, aware of the local feeling at that time, at least critical if not hostile to the new order of things, he added, "This event, so novel in its nature, so important in its results, may excite sentiments, solemn and awful indeed, but not those of compunction or regret. It was the consequence of voluntary offers and wished-for acceptance. It separates from each state a part of its soil and a portion of its citizens, but it forms a community compact in situation, united in in-

[1] Proceedings of the Commissioners, Sept. 15, 1801.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 23, 1801.

[3] An act supplementary to an act concerning the District of Columbia. March 3, 1801.

[4] The sessions of the court were directed to be held alternately in each county every month except February, May, August, and November, which was changed by the law of May 3, 1802, to two terms yearly in each county.

terest and happily placed in that centre from which must emanate the collected wisdom of united America."[1] About a month earlier, and less than two weeks after Mr. Jefferson had become president, he was entertained at dinner by the citizens of Alexandria. The vice-president, the cabinet officers and General James Wilkinson in command of the army accompanied the president. The distinguished guests were received at the Virginia end of the Georgetown ferry by two troops of cavalry, while near Alexandria Captain Janney's company of riflemen fired a salute, and drawn up at the entrance to the town was Colonel George Deneale's regiment of militia.[2]

A few days prior to the convening of the circuit court in Alexandria, Judge Kilty organized what was termed in the newspaper account, a court of admiralty. This term only described a part of the functions of this new judicial body which was a United States district court for the Potomac district created by the laws of Feb. 13, 1801, and of March 3, 1801.[3] George Deneale, the clerk of the circuit court of Alexandria County, was appointed clerk. The president of the United States appointed George Dent marshal of the Potomac district.

After an existence for two terms, namely April and October, 1801, this court was abolished by the act of March 8, 1802, which restored the United States district courts established by the law of 1789.[4]

[1] *Alexandria Advertiser*, April 20, 1801. It may be inferred from the lack of reference to the subject that the anomaly as well as the burden placed on the judges in the administration of the Maryland laws in Washington County and Virginia laws in Alexandria County by one court was looked upon as only temporary or until congress provided a uniform system. But such an expectation was not realized. The old Maryland and Virginia laws continued in force, except as repealed or modified by the laws of congress. Nearly a century elapsed before a code was provided for the District as it is at present territorially constituted.

[2] The same, March 16, 1801.

[3] The same, April 8 and 9, 1801.

[4] The Potomac district created by the law of Feb. 13, 1801, was formed from the Maryland and the Virginia judicial districts and comprised Montgomery County, a portion of Prince George County, and Fairfax and Loudoun counties.

Owing to the change in the political relations of the District, its territory was no longer included within the jurisdiction of existing courts, so that congress, by the act of April 29, 1802, instead of creating a separate court, empowered the chief judge of the circuit court of the District to hold a district court of the United States in April and October of each year with the same powers and jurisdiction as vested in the district courts of the United States with appeal to the circuit court of the District of Columbia and from thence to the United States Supreme Court. The contemporary title of an admiralty court was probably due to the class of cases that were ready to be heard at that time.

At the close of the second term of this court Judge Kilty sent a memorial to congress asking for an increase in his salary "in consideration of the additional labor and inconvenience" in holding the district court for the Potomac district, but the committee of the house in an adverse report expressed the opinion that his compensation was adequate.[1]

The opening session of the circuit court in Alexandria County was apparently a brief one, although it was at this term that the actual work of the court was begun in the hearing and deciding cases.[2] The court appointed Cleon Moore the register of wills, commissioner in chancery and notary public, also George Gilpin, the same name as that of the judge of the orphans' court of Alexandria County, as harbor master, and Charles Alexander, Jr., and Elisha C. Dick, coroners.[3]

From the outset the court held its sessions in the court-house in Alexandria, formerly used by the Fairfax County court, and it was in this building the orphans' court held its first session

[1] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 326 and 433, Dec. 15, 1801.

[2] The reports of the District of Columbia circuit court prepared by Judge Cranch begins its record with cases heard at the first Alexandria term. No cases are reported as having been decided at the first Washington term.

[3] *Alexandria Advertiser*, April 14, 1801. The following were admitted as attorneys: Charles Lee, Thomas Swann, Edmund I. Lee, Robert I. Taylor, John Love, Walter Jones, Jr., George Young and Jonathan Faw.

in June.[1] At the next term of the circuit court in Washington County, which began June 22, 1801, the court met as before in the room adjoining on the south the senate chamber. A grand jury was formed, and as the chronicler of the time reported, Judge Kilty delivered a pertinent charge.[2] Some notion of the character of the cases that came before the court, as well as the nature of the penalties imposed, may be gathered from the following record as it appeared in the *Alexandria Advertiser* of July 9, 1801: John Chancey for larceny, publicly whipped; Charles Houseman, for larceny, publicly whipped and burned in the hand; Samuel Barke for larceny, burnt in the hand; John Peder and Samuel Morris, larceny, found guilty, but on the recommendation of the court were pardoned by the president of the United States.

The whipping post as an instrument of judicial punishment was also used at this period in Washington County, as witness an advertisement in the *Intelligencer* of the marshal of the District and the jailer of the Washington jail offering a reward for the return of prisoners who broke jail June 6, 1802. The back of one of the men, the notice reads, is "much seared from a whipping he received at the public post of this place." The pillory was also in use.[3]

It may be noted that even at this early period in the career of the District, it had become a central point for the trade in slaves. The practice of citizens from distant parts of the country coming into the District to pursue a traffic "fraught with so much misery to a class of beings entitled to our protection by the laws of justice and humanity" was denounced by the grand jury of Alexandria County in the course of a few months after the organization of the circuit court.[4]

[1] *Alexandria Advertiser*, May 22, 1801.

[2] *Intelligencer*, June 22, 1801.

[3] C. C. Rep. Cranch, Vol. 1, p. 123.

[4] *Washington Federalist*, Jan. 25, 1802. That this protest had some sanction from the community may be inferred from the fact there was in existence at that time in Alexandria "A society for the relief and protection of persons illegally held in bondage." *Alexandria Advertiser*, May 8, 1801. Call for a meeting of the society to be held at A. McClean's school.

Yet so slow was the progress of public sentiment on this subject, that nearly half a century passed before the legislative redress asked for by the grand jurors of Alexandria County was secured. As one outcome of the compromise bill of 1850, the slave trade in the District was abolished.

The demands made upon the available space in the capitol building during the first year it was occupied is clearly brought out by the varied uses of the room adjoining the senate chamber on the south. It was originally designed for the office of the clerk of the senate and was probably occupied by that official. But here also were held the sessions of the United States Supreme Court and of the circuit court of the District, while in addition the books brought by congress from Philadelphia and those that had been purchased in accordance with the act of April 24, 1800, were placed in that room. Here they remained until the beginning of the year 1802, when by direction of the law of Jan. 26, 1802, the room on the west front of the north wing just vacated by the house was appropriated for the use of the library of congress that was by that law given its first organization.[1]

The clerk of the house, John Beckley, was appointed librarian by President Jefferson. At that time the library consisted of such books as had been purchased by congress during the ten years of its existence, and also 740 books purchased in England in the year 1801. When a library room was assigned by the law of 1802 it was directed that "the books or libraries which have heretofore been kept separately by each house shall be removed and set up with those lately purchased." The first catalogue was published in 1802.

While the levy court was looking after the repairs of existing bridges in the city, the citizens were ambitious to provide such connections with the great extent of contiguous territory in Maryland and Virginia.

At this time interest was revived in a project to erect a bridge over the Eastern Branch at the foot of Kentucky Avenue where

[1] History of the Library of Congress. Vol. 1, 1800–1864. William Dawson Johnston, p. 34. Washington, 1904.

the upper ferry was located. In the spring of 1801 those named in the incorporation act of the Maryland legislature of Dec. 24, 1795, announced that books would be opened for subscriptions to the stock of the company which was limited to $45,000.[1] In a couple of months all the stock had been taken,[2] and by the end of October proposals to erect the bridge were asked for over the name of William Brent, secretary of the Eastern Branch Bridge Co., but more than two years passed before the work was advanced enough to enable the company to collect tolls.[3]

The condition of that waterway at that period may be judged from the description given of the character of the proposed structure. The width of the stream was stated to be 1543 feet, the average depth of the water at common low tide was four feet, except one channel, which was twelve to fourteen feet in depth and 450 feet wide.[4]

While such a facility of communication with the adjacent territory of Maryland was being prepared, a still more ambitious project was proposed, when announcement was made that a book had been opened at Stelle's Hotel "by sundry inhabitants" of Washington for subscriptions to shares for the erection of a bridge over the Potomac from Maryland Avenue to Alexander's Island.[5] There is no record of the response to this appeal, but it may be inferred that it was not encouraging, for the following month a petition was presented to the house asking the aid and patronage of congress in the enterprise.[6]

As the first appeal made to congress by citizens of the District for assistance from the public funds in a local improvement, this petition is of interest, but it gains an additional

[1] The *Museum*, March 18, 1801.

[2] *National Intelligencer*, May 4, 1801. *Alexandria Advertiser*, May 5, 1801.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 11, 1804. Notice that tolls would be collected for crossing the bridge.

[4] Same, Oct. 26, 1801.

[5] Same, Nov. 14, 1801.

[6] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., 1801–1802, p. 347. See also pp. 422 and 426 for counter and additional petitions.

consequence as it brought to the attention of the members of the national legislature a phase in the government of the District just assumed that for some reason was regarded as peculiar to the people of the District; namely, there were differences of opinion on local matters. For the petition favoring the bridge was followed by one signed by citizens of the District opposed to such a measure. In a brief time no less than five petitions representing current opinions had been presented. They were all referred to a committee that was considering a form of internal government for the District, which proved to be a final disposition as far as that congress was concerned.

But it was soon evident the project of bridging the Potomac was really vital in the prosperity of the three towns of the District. A bridge meant not merely improved facilities for local travel and trade, but a lessening of nearly six miles in the great highway between the north and the south. It also meant leaving Georgetown to one side. There was also the peril of such a structure causing an increase in the deposits which were already impairing the navigation of the Virginia channel, as well as that on the short stretch of water front of Washington between Peters Point at the foot of D Street, N. W., and the mouth of Rock Creek.[1]

Independent of the effect of the bridge on the course of commerce and travel, doubt was early expressed that such a structure could be built in the place proposed strong enough to withstand the force of the seasonal floods or freshes, as the term then was, that were characteristic of the Potomac then and have been ever since.

Only twenty years had elapsed since the memorable rise of the river in the spring of 1780, when a dam was formed of ice masses, trees and other débris extending from Georgetown to Analostan Island. The water forced west of the island formed a channel there, while the main channel that up to that time

[1] A notion of the opinion of the day on what proved to be one of the most bitter and long-continued controversies in this period of the District can be gathered from the communications on the subject in the newspapers. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 11, 1801, and Jan. 22, 1802. *Museum*, Jan. 6 and 11, 1802.

passed along the Maryland shore became partially filled and the Virginia channel was created.[1]

But the effect on Georgetown, and more especially on its river trade, was what imparted heat to the controversy, particularly later, for it was not until some six years passed that a charter for a bridge company was secured and the first structure was built.

"Is there," asked one of the first who discussed the matter, "a large commercial city on this side of the Atlantic on a river navigable to sea-going vessels, below which there is a bridge?"[2]

Shall the Potomac be the first to try the hazardous experiment? he asked. How would the people of Philadelphia or Baltimore or Alexandria like such a proposition and view the prospect of being pocketed on the river with all free and ready access shut off? He pointed out that such a bridge would be an impediment to navigation because of the difficulty sailing vessels of large size would have in making the opening at the draw. It would be necessary, he asserted, to tow them, thus losing time and also the opportunity of taking advantage of the tide. The smaller vessels, he added, that now are able to ascend the river by tacking would be deprived of that recourse. The writer further pointed out that in the nature of things about the piles on which the bridge would rest mud banks would be formed that would soon render the channel useless.

How absurd it is, he exclaimed, that it should be proposed to create such a condition within a stone throw of where the citizens of Georgetown were spending several thousand dollars to remove an obstruction in the channel. This reference of the writer was to the efforts that were being made to remove a mud bank at the south end of Analostan Island. In the issue of the

[1] Report of George W. Hughes, Civil Engineer to Secretary of the Treasury. 23d Cong., 2d Sess., No. 133, Feb. 21, 1835. Also speech of Joseph Lewis, Jr., of Virginia in the House. Annals of Congress, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., 1804–1805, p. 795. Also injunction suit Washington Bridge Co. *vs.* Corp. of Georgetown. In Potomac Flats Case, United States *vs.* Morris. Testimony, p. 454.

[2] Communication signed Citizen of Georgetown. *Intelligencer*, Jan. 22, 1802. Reprinted from the *Museum.*

*Museum* of April 10, 1801, of the preceding spring was printed a communication calling attention to the importance of the removal of this mud bank which impeded the entrance of ships into the Georgetown harbor. Loaded ships, the writer stated, can no longer pass over it.

The importance of the subject was at once recognized, for the *Museum* four days later recorded that a meeting of citizens had been held to devise means to remove a bank of mud that had formed in the channel of the river "in the last two or three years just below the point of Mason's Island." "It seems," continues this account, "that over this bank there is not more than eleven feet of water at low tide, although immediately above and below it the channel is from twenty-four to thirty feet deep."

A committee was appointed to prepare a plan, and several thousand dollars were expended during the summer and fall of 1801 "by the citizens of Georgetown and the upper part of Washington" in clearing the obstruction from the channel.[1] The promoters of the two bridge enterprises no doubt were confident that the more direct and rapid means of access to the city which they proposed would tend to expand and stimulate its growth and business. At the same time they naturally looked for some return on their money, and in this they were encouraged by the statement to the stockholders of the affairs of the Georgetown Bridge Co., which was at that time published.[2] The stockholders were informed that the structure which had been erected below the Little Falls at a cost of nearly $63,000 had yielded, since the year 1797, when tolls were first received, a sufficient revenue to pay the maintenance charges and also interest on a debt of $16,000 which had been contracted to meet the deficiency in subscriptions to the stock. It was now proposed to sell eighty-six shares of the unissued stock at the par value of $200 per share, pay off the indebtedness, thus leaving the revenues free for the payment of a dividend which it was calculated would be at least six per cent per annum. The stock would be first offered to stockholders and the shares not

[1] *Museum*, Jan. 11, 1802.

[2] The same, Dec. 21, 1801.

taken by them would be offered to the public. It may be concluded that this promising statement of the condition and prospects of the enterprise failed to elicit an adequate response, for, in the course of a year a suit was brought against the bridge company to enforce the sale of its property in satisfaction of the debt which the proceeds of the new stock were designed to satisfy.[1] An enterprise that was prosperous was the Bank of Alexandria: six years previously the Virginia legislature had authorized an increase in its capital stock from $150,000 to $500,000. Only about one-half of the new stock had been disposed of and at this time the remaining shares were offered for sale and found a ready market.[2]

The uncertainty as to the effect of the assumption of the government of the District, on the future of this institution as well as that of the Bank of Columbia, was finally dispelled by the clause in the act of Feb. 27, 1801, which left undisturbed all corporate bodies in the District. The anxiety on this subject cropped out in newspaper discussion.[3]

This feeling was apparently responsible for the provision of the Virginia act of Jan. 21, 1801, extending the bank charter to March 4, 1811, which authorized the stockholders to hold the meetings for the election of directors in Fairfax County. Also to "remove and conduct the business of the said bank out of the District of Columbia and within the county of Fairfax." But as it turned out the corporate privileges of the bank were left unimpaired by congress, so that this proved to be an illustration of the adage that most of our troubles never occur. The bank continued in business under the Virginia charter until within a few days of its expiration, when its existence was continued by the act of congress of Feb. 15, 1811.

It is probable neither the present nor future prospects of the

[1] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 20, 1802.

[2] *Alexandria Advertiser*, June 10, 1801.

[3] Considerations on the government of the territory of Columbia, No. VI, being a reply to a writer under the signature of Columbus on the subject of the banks of Alexandria and Georgetown. A. B. Woodward. *Georgetown Museum*, Feb. 4, 1801. No issue of this essay in separate form is known.

city as such had much to do with the action of the directors of the Bank of the United States in deciding to establish a branch bank in the new city. The fiscal affairs of the government and convenience in attending to them through an agency at the seat of government were the determining factor. At any rate this decision was reached in the summer of 1801, and by the end of September the arrangements were well under way and James Davidson of Philadelphia was appointed cashier.[1] A lot was purchased at the northeast corner of 13th and F streets, N. W., and here by the end of November a two-story building was erected 25 × 41 feet and adjoining it on the east was built a house for the cashier, three stories high and 24 × 36 feet. A local board of directors was appointed, following in this respect the policy as to all branches of the parent institution established in various parts of the country. The Washington branch bank was also known later on as the office of discount and deposit for the District of Columbia, but of course the main business was governmental as it was the depository of public funds, disbursed the dividends on United States stock and collected and transmitted the public funds.

Under the terms of the charter of the Bank of the United States granted by congress Feb. 27, 1791, to continue to March 4, 1811, no other bank could be authorized by that body during the life of the charter, so that without a branch of the United States Bank, Washington would have had no incorporated bank until after 1811, and in fact no banking institution was established in the District by act of congress until after that date. The Bank of Columbia in Georgetown and the Alexandria Bank, being in existence prior to the District becoming a separate political entity, were left undisturbed in the rights they possessed. In each of the towns, however, prior to 1811, what were known as private banks were established, managed by limited partnerships or unincorporated companies. Thus the Bank

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 23, 1801. *Museum*, Nov. 30, 1801. Previous to the opening of the Branch Bank, according to a report of Albert Gallatin (Annals of Congress, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., June 13, 1812, p. 2056), all the treasury business was transacted through the Bank of Columbia.

of Potomac was started in Alexandria in 1804, the Bank of Washington in Washington in 1809, and the Union Bank in Georgetown in 1809.[1] In January, 1801, the prospectus of a stock company was issued which proposed to do a general fire insurance business as well as banking.[2] This company was the Washington Association and United States Insurance Co., Dr. William Thornton, president. It was one of Samuel Blodgett's schemes and bore his characteristic mark in the amount of the capital stock, which was to be $2,000,000. Another characteristic provision was that payment for shares would be received in lots in the city of Washington, but not to exceed one-half of the amount of the stock. Announcement was made that this first fire insurance company in the new city would commence business on the 16th of June at the office of the company opposite the United States Treasury Office.[3] As might be expected in the case of a company placing such a large proportion of its capital in property that was in litigation, and which in the course of three years was sold without yielding enough to satisfy the first lien, its existence was a brief one.

Another enterprise that was started in August, 1801, was the pioneer building association of the city. It was known as the Washington Building Co., Clotworthy Stephenson, chairman, and Thomas Herty, secretary.[4] In less than a year the associa-

[1] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 8, p. 15.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 1, 1801, the constitution of the company in full. It is also published in pamphlet form with the title, Constitution of the Washington Association and United States Insurance Co., 8 pp. Washington City. Printed by Charles Cist, north E Street, near the post-office [1801].

[3] The same, June 15, 1801. Also statements of Dr. Thornton in the issue of August 31, and in the *Museum* of Sept. 7, 1801, defending the company from the charge of having received lots from Blodgett in exchange for stock. It was asserted the lots were twice mortgaged, which Dr. Thornton claimed was only the case nominally. Dr. Thornton added that a bank would be opened by the company, "as soon as the building now in forwardness is ready in the city."

[4] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 4, 1801. The constitution is given in full and is also published in separate form, with the title, The Constitution or Articles of Agreement of the Washington Building Co., etc. 16 pp. Washington, Territory of Columbia. Printed by Way and Groff, north E Street, 1801.

tion was able to offer for sale three houses which it had built on 12th Street, just south of Pennsylvania Avenue, to one of which the office of the company had been removed.[1] At first, however, the office was the same as that of its secretary, who, in addition to conveying, as he informed the public, had "opened an office for the sale of city lots on the Pennsylvania Avenue fronting the President's Square near Rhodes Tavern."[2] Monthly payments of one dollar on each share were to be made by the shareholders of the building association, and the money thus secured was to be used in the building and finishing houses and buying lots and dwellings in the city of Washington. The last act in the entire collapse of the first and largest business enterprise of the city, the sugar refinery at Greenleaf Point, came in the first month of 1801, when James D. Barry, as trustee under a decree of the court of chancery of Maryland, offered for sale the building on the west side of New Jersey Avenue between N and O streets, S. E. The sugar making, which began in April, 1798, did not last long, and as the result of litigation between James Piercy, the mortgagee, and Thomas Law and others the sale of the property was ordered.[3]

The close of the first year of the existence of the *National Intelligencer* was marked by the removal of the office of publication from New Jersey Avenue and E streets, S. E. to the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 6th and 7th streets, N. W.[4] About midway in that block one of three three-story houses was leased where the printing office was located and also the home of the editor. For some months ever since the *Cabinet* had ceased

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 10 and Oct. 22, 1802.

[2] Same, July 6, 1801. Mr. Herty was not alone in the real estate business, as Robert W. Peacock, a member of the District bar, advertised lots and houses for sale at his office near the corner of 14th and F streets. Same, Oct. 21, 1801.

[3] The same, Jan. 30, 1801. The building, which was eight stories high with a wing of five stories with dimensions of 47 × 46 feet, was occupied up to the year 1811 by Cornelius Coningham for his brewery business. It stood for many years a conspicuous landmark, gradually going to ruin, and was torn down in 1847. Greenleaf and Law in the *Federal City*, p. 245.

[4] The same, Nov. 13, 1801. In the issue of Oct. 12, 1807, the location is given as lot 5 and part of lot 4, Square 461.

to appear, the *Intelligencer* had occupied the Washington newspaper field, and in its case the patronage of "distant subscribers" was no doubt an important source of revenue. It was even at that early period to a large extent the official organ of the administration, the medium through which the acts of the executive were announced, and, what was probably of more consequence to the proprietor, perhaps, where the public notices and other advertising matter of the executive departments appeared.[1] The printing of congress was given out by the officers of the two houses to such printers, as they might select,[2] and as the imprints of the public documents of that period show, this patronage was divided among a number. Rapine, Conrad and Co., printers and booksellers, who had followed Congress from Philadelphia, got a share. So did William Duane, the editor of the pungent Philadelphia newspaper, the *Aurora*, who opened a printing office combined as was quite common in that day with a book and stationery store at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 6th Street, N. W.[3] Here the Apollo Press was located, William Duane and Son, proprietors.

A Printing and Bookselling Co. was organized for "the purpose of printing and selling books in the city of Washington." [4] During the summer of 1801, it may be inferred that James Lyon,

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 1, 1840.

[2] Same, Jan. 15, 1849.

[3] Same, Dec. 11, 1801.

[4] Same, Aug. 14, 1801. Apparently one of the objects was the manufacture of paper, for, as the prospectus of the company explained, "there is not south of Philadelphia any extensive manufactory of paper or books," yet, "since the removal of the government to the city of Washington, the consumption and demand for paper in the District of Columbia is supposed to be more than would be produced by ten ordinary paper mills, while there is not one within forty miles of it." It was also known as the Franklin Press, and it was there the *National Magazine*, or *Cabinet of the United States*, Richard Dinmore, editor, was printed.

This enterprise apparently did not survive long. One book at any rate was issued which had the title, Select and Fugitive Poetry. A compilation with notes. By Richard Dinmore. Washington City. Printed at the Franklin Press, 1802. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 4, p. 50.

who had started in Georgetown the previous fall the short-lived newspaper, the *Cabinet*, sought other fields, as the announcement appeared that the circulating library he had proposed opening on Pennsylvania Avenue "the first door west of the President's Square," would be conducted by Richard Dinmore, who had succeeded to his printing business.[1] Another circulating library under the management of Hugh Somerville was found by that gentleman to interfere "with his grocery and liquor business," and so he notified his patrons that it would be removed from his residence to the house of John D. Brashiers, "between the President's House and the market now erecting on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue."[2] Both Rapine, Conrad and Co. and William Duane announced through the columns of the *Intelligencer* the arrival of supplies of new books, giving their titles, which apparently indicated the existence of a reading public.[3] "Folks are most literary here," states the author of an article on Washington. "We are going to have [William] Goodwin's works printed here," but nothing more was done about that publication than the announcement of the proposal to print.[4] In Georgetown, as in Alexandria, there were two newspapers, but in the case of these vehicles of information in Georgetown, both supported the Federal party, and perhaps that had something to do with the merging of the two concerns.

Green and English, the publishers of the *Museum*, a tri-weekly, sold the paper and their printing office to Rind and Prentiss, the publishers of the *Federalist*, a daily.[5] The *Museum*, after an existence of six years, made its farewell bow on Jan. 22, 1802, and the *Washington Federalist* became the only newspaper published in Georgetown. In the year 1803 the *Federalist* changed from a daily into a tri-weekly.

It was through the initiative taken by the editor of the *Intelligencer*, who presented a memorial to the senate requesting that he be assigned a place on the floor, where he could hear in order

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 23, 1801.
[2] Same, Oct. 30, 1801.
[3] Same, May 15, June 3, Aug. 19 and Dec. 11, 1801.
[4] *Alexandria Advertiser*, May 25, 1801. *Intelligencer*, April 15, 1801.
[5] *Museum*, Jan. 22, 1802.

to make a report of the debates, as that was impossible in the gallery, that for the first time accounts of the discussions in that body were reported and also published in the newspapers, but not regularly until after the year 1818.[1]

[1] The first reports of the senate debates began in the *Intelligencer*, Jan. 8, 1802. Also in the Annals of Congress. *Intelligencer*, March 11, 1818.

## CHAPTER XVII

### UNDER THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

NINE months passed after the inauguration of Mr. Jefferson, before the first Republican congress assembled. The political revolution had not checked the growth and development of the city. There had been an increase of 63 per cent in the number of buildings since the removal of the government.[1]

As the members came together in December, 1801, they found more houses in the city for their accommodation than had been the experience of their predecessors of the sixth congress. No change had been made in the cost of living, which was still found to be higher than in Philadelphia, according to the experience of two members of the house.[2] A third member, however, expressed his dissent and asserted that provisions and labor were lower than in Philadelphia.[3]

It was the opinion of one of the congressional observers of the city that speculation in city lots had led to an inflation in land values, and in consequence ground for building was not to be had on moderate terms.[4] The population, it was noted, had been derived principally "from the more distant states in the Union and from Europe" and not from the near-by states; thus at an early date the city received the impress of a cosmopolitan centre which it has ever since retained.[5] To some extent

[1] Proceedings of Commissioners, Nov. 25, 1801. Return of Robert King, Jr., of enumeration of houses in the city by squares. American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 256.

[2] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 1088, 1089 and 1091.

[3] Abraham Bradley, Jr., the assistant postmaster-general, found that provisions were plentiful and cheaper than in Philadelphia, while he evidently thought house rent was high. Removal of the Seat of Government, p. 5, 56th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen., No. 62.

[4] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 308.

[5] Considerations on the Government of the Territory of Columbia. A. B. Woodward. No. 8, p. 24.

the rawness and discomforts of a new settlement had been toned down. A more commodious place of meeting had been provided for the house of representatives, while, at the same time, the pressure on the space in the north wing, where the senate sat, had been relieved. The government employees continued to serve under the new administration, as they had under the old, and the unsettling influence of general removals from office, following a change in the party administration, was not then a factor in the welfare of the city.

The clerkships did not fall within the scope of the removals made by Mr. Jefferson, and so Washington did not suffer from the spoils system at this period, as was the case years later when the application was more sweeping.[1]

But to many minds a new era had begun. What had been wrong in the administration of the government under the Federal party was to be laid bare, and a committee with a dragnet commission was appointed by the house to investigate all public expenditures of the past. Early attention was turned to the District, and the day after the house convened a committee was appointed to report on what alterations or amendments were necessary in its existing laws and regulations. An apprehension as to the attitude of the national legislature towards the District may, no doubt, be traced to some extent in a communication which appeared some days later in the *Intelligencer*, the writer of which, in a satirical vein, suggested that congress would undoubtedly show an independence of spirit by annulling acts of the former congress relating to the District merely for the sake of change. Because large sums of money had been expended in the new city for the accommodation of the government, yet, the writer observed, they need not be deterred by mere considerations of pitiful economy or a violation of public faith in taking action to remove the seat of government to

[1] An interesting discussion of changes in federal offices for political reasons appeared in the *Intelligencer* of April 15, 1803. The writer was opposed to general removals. For a further discussion, see the *Intelligencer* of June 15, 1803.

another place.[1] As the first recorded suggestion at this period of a change in the location of the capital city, this communication may be regarded as giving one of the aspects at least of the current feeling relative to the situation of the District at the close of the first year since congress began its sittings there. The removal idea gained ground, and at the next session, what was generally looked upon as having the same meaning, was a resolution offered in the house by John Bacon of Massachusetts declaring the expediency of retroceding to the states of Maryland and Virginia the territory of the District.[2] But the revolution pictured by the federalists did not materialize, neither on the other hand did the triumphant Republicans find dishonesty in the government of the past. A similar failure in current expectations may be traced in the course pursued in District affairs. Instead of undoing what had been done, a disposition was manifested to give a liberal share of attention to promoting District interests. The committee appointed by the house to consider the subject of the government of the District practically became the committee on the District, as all local matters were referred to it.

As the variety as well as the number of the subjects demanding the attention of the national legislature were disclosed during this session in the petitions and memorials from Washington and Georgetown in their corporate capacity and from citizens, some of the members began to realize that exclusive legislation, even over a territory limited to ten miles square, had its responsibilities and burdens as well as conferring dignity and independence upon the national government. For during the first session in the new city, no District matter had been before congress except whether an assumption of the constitutional powers should be made, and, if assumed, how exercised. But now that congress had assumed the powers of exclusive legislation, and at its very first meeting it was promptly made acquainted with the variety and scope of civic needs as well as with the divergent points of view of public sentiment in the making. The two

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 18, 1801.

[2] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 2d Sess., Feb. 8, 1803, p. 486.

towns asked for ampler powers, especially in the exercise of the right to levy taxes for improvements. Charters of companies were wanted to build a canal in Washington city, to engage in the building and selling of houses, while authority or aid was requested to build a bridge over the Potomac, one over the Eastern Branch and also "a house for the exercise of public worship." One of the District judges asked for additional compensation, while a resolution was introduced for the establishment of a chancery court. Then there were questions of the kind and extent of a local government evoking the clash of opinion and of interests.

But another phase of the relations between congress and the District, and one that proved to be highly irritating to some of the members of the national legislature was brought out, when congress found itself the centre of a contest over such a matter as the erection of a bridge across the Potomac. As stated, this was the first purely local question of a highly controversial nature that was fought out in the halls of congress. Members, wearied with the discussion and impatient to get at subjects in which they had a more vital or personal concern, cried out that citizens of the District should settle their difficulties elsewhere, and that it was neither just nor expedient that the time and attention of the national legislature should be occupied with other than national matters. But when, later on, it was proposed to correct the evil, no agreement could be reached.

The remedy of retrocession of the territory, either in whole or in part, was never favored by more than a scattering minority, while the other device of delegating to a local government the powers of congress was never accepted in any adequate form. Yet while irritation was expressed in the halls of congress at the necessity of taking time to consider the affairs of the District, at the same time, the kind of government to be provided for the District was not, in the winter of 1801–02, a local question in the sense that it made no appeal to the interest of the members of congress. For in that matter the initiative came from congress, and not from the citizens, by the appointment of a committee early in the session to consider the subject. In the course of

six weeks a bill providing for a territorial form of government for the District was reported to the house.[1]

Two months later, when the bill came up for action, its consideration was postponed for that session, on the ground, as stated in the house, that its provisions were disagreeable to a great majority of the people. The *Intelligencer* adds also that the provisions would be oppressive and expensive.[2] No doubt there were citizens who preferred a legislature of two bodies, rather than one as provided in the pending bill, and without question there were decided differences of opinion as to the degree of representation to be given to different parts of the District. Then again there were not lacking those who believed the cost of the proposed form of government would prove burdensome to a sparsely settled community. While some of the citizens, probably few in number, favored a general government for the District, yet only as a preliminary to its admission to the federal union, not as a state but "as a represented territory."[3]

Both representation in the federal system and a government for the District were discussed during the first debate in congress on the District and early in the discussion on the Bacon resolution they came up again. One of the speakers, who was opposed to retrocession, said "he looked forward to a period when the inhabitants from their number and riches would be entitled to a representation on this floor. And with respect to their local concerns, when they grew more numerous and wealthy, there would be no difficulty in giving them a territorial legislature."[4]

There is no record of any exception taken to the representation proposed to be given the federal government in all the territorial schemes of government for the District nor, in fact, when Washington was incorporated, is there any record showing opposition to placing the executive power in the hands of a federal appointee. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that feature of the local government met with not merely the

[1] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 463.
[2] History of the Last Session of Congress. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 4, 1802.
[3] Anonymous articles. *Intelligencer*, Feb. 25 and March 2, 1803.
[4] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 488, Feb. 8, 1803.

acquiescence but the actual approval of the citizens. At least, that was the language of the memorial sent to congress six months later by the city council. "The plan of city government," it was stated, "adopted for Washington, which institutes a popular legislative body, associated with a distinct executive magistrate, meets with the highest approbation of your memoralists." [1] Why a form of government for the District as a whole was not agreeable to the citizens can only be generally determined. There is no record that legislation of that sort was asked for at that time, although a year later a committee appointed at a meeting of citizens of Washington and Washington County asked congress to authorize a delegate convention in the District to frame a form of government.[2] This action was considered by the writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of Feb. 21, 1803, as only equivocal, while, he added, Alexandria is hostile and Georgetown had withheld coöperation. In the spring of 1802, a few days before the house disposed for the time of the territorial government bill by postponing action, the citizens of Washington, as the result of a public meeting, adopted resolutions praying congress "to grant them a corporation or such other internal government or police as their present circumstances may require." But nothing was said of a government for the entire District.[3] Congress was informed by a paper signed by citizens of Alexandria that no form of government was favored that would unite the two parts of the District as separated by the Potomac.[4] Citizens of Georgetown petitioned the house not to pass the territorial bill until at least it was so amended as to increase the powers of the corporation.[5] Here again, as in the case of the Potomac bridge measure, the members of the national legislature became aware of the clash of opinion and of interests among the citizens of the District. The *Intelligencer* speaks of "the extreme difficulty and delicacy of the

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1802.

[2] The same, Jan. 10 and 14, 1803.

[3] The same, March 24, 1802; also Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1087, March 26, 1802.

[4] The same, p. 463.

[5] The same, p. 475.

subject," but concludes that a failure of subsequent attempts at that session was owing "still more, perhaps, to the apathy of the members."[1]

Some suggestion of the situation may be traced, doubtless, in the allusions to the people of the District in the course of the debate on the retrocession resolution, which came up first at the following session (February, 1803) and was revived two years later.

During the first discussion, John Randolph of Roanoke declared the interests of the several parts of the territory were as hostile as any in the union, as it was manifest there was an Alexandria, a Georgetown and a city interest and even within the city a Capitol Hill interest and a president's house interest which were irreconcilable.

One member asserted in the second retrocession debate that took place in the house in January, 1805, that "there were as many interfering interests in this ten-mile square as in the whole United States." To show congress was not competent to legislate for the District, a speaker declared that what with petitions and counterpetitions "the House is suspended between two or more jarring interests."[2] On the other hand, it was freely pointed out that apathy, indifference and ignorance of of members of congress of District affairs had already prevented the formation of a proper framework of government. "Whenever a subject which interests the territory of Columbia is called before either house of congress a universal complaint of want of preparation prevails. Procrastination or otherwise a precipitate disposition of the subject is the consequence."[3]

An illuminating comment on the subject was made at this period by the clear-headed and practical John Quincy Adams, who wrote, "One of the great difficulties in our legislation for the District of Columbia is that every member of congress

[1] History of the Last Session of Congress. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 4, 1802.
[2] Annals of Congress, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 903 and 916.
[3] Considerations on the government of the territory of Columbia. No. 8, p. 12, Jan. 31, 1803.

brings with him the principles of his own state system, and these are so different that there is scarcely any common doctrine to which appeal in argument can be made." [1]

Doubtless the editor of the *Intelligencer* voiced the sentiments of a good many citizens when he wrote in indignation of "the degraded political condition, exhibiting the humiliating spectacle of a body of citizens deprived of all their political rights." [2] Such views were not shared by all the members of the Republican party, of which the *Intelligencer* was the organ, or by the president, a friend of the editor, which shows that party lines were not always drawn in District legislation.

It is quite clear that one result of the experience of the first session as the legislature of the District was to impress on the minds of some members of congress that the District was a good deal of a bother and demanded much time. In fact, this was the second in the list of reasons given by Mr. Bacon for proposing the retrocession resolutions early in the following session. It was also an argument freely used by others in the course of the discussion.

Leaving, as some thought, to the future, the execution of a plan for a general government for the District — for it should be borne in mind the proposed territorial government was not to take the place of town corporations — the house in the spring of 1802 proceeded to consider a bill to give Washington a corporate government. An agreement on such a measure was quickly reached and was readily substituted in the senate for a measure that had been reported to that body apparently of the same general character as that of the house territorial bill.

On the 3d of May, 1802, the incorporation bill became a law and as indicating, as the same feature of the territorial bill did, the change that had taken place in the Republican party since its advent to power in its ideas of the relations between the District and the general government, it need only to be observed that the mayor to whom was given authority to appoint all city officials was himself appointed by the president. In this

[1] Memoirs. Vol. 1, p. 422, March 18, 1806.
[2] Aug. 4, 1802.

detail is shadowed forth the distinctive character which the city has never lost. It was distinguished from the two other towns of the territory, where the mayors belonged to the group of ten or more men annually or biennially elected by the property holders of the respective places to be the city councils and on whom authority was conferred to choose from their number one to serve as mayor.

In other respects Washington's first city charter was not unlike those granted to towns in that locality. The right to vote and to hold office was limited, as was common at that period, to those who owned property. It is quite apparent the Republicans who then and later on in the discussion of District affairs expressed feelings of abhorrence at the spectacle of a community without a voice in the making of laws, which they were obliged to obey, did not so regard a community where a selected few had the right of suffrage.

It is curious to read the furious and then again the pathetic protests in the discussion on District affairs against continuing a community of slaves in the bosom of freedom and at the same time to realize that the speakers came from communities where less than one fifth of the entire population had any voice in public affairs and who as legislators for the District deprived citizens from having part in their local government who were not the owners of property. In this particular phase of the form of government provided for Washington, as with others, congress made no experiments, but gave the citizens a municipal charter usual at that period. At that time the charter of Georgetown granted by the Maryland legislature permitted no citizen to vote unless he had "visible property." [1] The Virginia legislature in granting a charter to Alexandria limited the exercise of the franchise to "freeholders and housekeepers." [2] When in the year 1804 congress granted to both Alexandria and Georgetown charters amended and enlarged, the restrictions as to suffrage were not removed. So it is apparent that some

[1] Act to incorporate Georgetown. Laws of Maryland, Dec. 25, 1789.
[2] An act for incorporating the town of Alexandria. Laws of Virginia, Oct. 4, 1779.

of the opinions advanced in the debates on the District were ahead of the prevailing practice of the day. At the same time there may be traced in the discussions during the seventh and eighth congresses, the beginnings of a public sentiment on the subject of the elective franchise that was destined to crystallize in the general adoption in the states of manhood suffrage. But the discussion of District topics in congress, then as now, was no doubt seized upon as an occasion for speeches intended mainly for home consumption.

In another respect the provision made for the government of Washington clashed with much that was said on the floor of the house on District affairs during this period. For by giving to the United States representation in the local government, a distinctive mark was set on the city and federal power was asserted and in both particulars, the tendency was directly opposed to the views of those members who saw in a district where congress only was supreme, the possibilities for the exercise and development of tyrannical power. The same principle of federal representation is also to be found in the various District territorial schemes. Where in one plan only a legislature was provided, the president of the United States was given the veto, as well as all executive functions. But in another form where a governor without a legislature was provided, then the office was to be filled by the president. This recurrence or assertion of the principle of federal supremacy in the form of government for the District as well as that provided for the city of Washington had the acquiescence of a majority of the members of congress and of the citizens.[1]

It is probably more than a mere coincidence that in the very next session following that of the winter of 1801–1802, at which time the national legislature for the first time had an opportunity of learning something of the volume of legislation expected by the people of the District and the difficulties and exasperations in the way of gratifying in whole or in part such wishes, the Bacon retrocession resolutions were introduced. But it

[1] Territorial bills in full. *Intelligencer*, Feb. 5 and 16, 1802, and Feb. 16, 1803.

was found after quite a lengthy debate that such a measure represented the views of only a small proportion of the members.[1] Nearly two years later, in the winter of 1805, a resolution similar in its character was brought before the house, and after a debate which was the longest held up to that time on District affairs was defeated by a majority nearly equal to the entire number of votes cast for it.[2]

On both occasions the constitutional relation of the federal government and of the District was elaborately discussed, and it was debated if both the United States and the two states, parties to the cession of the territory agreed, could not the status of the territory be restored as it was before the cession? The claim was made that the acquisition of the territory was the result of a contract, and that another contract was made when the United States bargained with the landowners.

But aside from such a consideration, there arose the question of expediency. It was evident to a number of members that time, trouble and expense would be saved the United States by getting rid of legislative responsibility over the District.

There were not wanting, however, those who attributed the zeal of some of the advocates of retrocession largely to the expectation that a removal of the seat of government would follow, and that the new location would suit better the interests they represented than the one chosen by the first president and the first congress. In fact, retrocession and removal in contemporary thought were quite generally regarded as synonymous, although some of the advocates of the former course maintained that it did not include the latter.[3] The unsettling influence of the retrocession agitation upon the values of property in the

[1] At this period an association was formed of citizens of Washington opposed to retrocession and in favor of a subordinate government, constituting a central body with branch associations in the several parts of the city. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 31, 1804.

[2] Annals of Congress, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 874 *et seq.*

[3] The much-disputed question whether a retrocession of the District is constitutional has never come before the Supreme Court, although the Virginia portion was retroceded in 1846.

District as well as upon plans for the improvement of the city was pointed out by more than one speaker. There is no question but that any uncertainty as to the permanency of the national seat had the effect of a cloud on land values and served to check progress and discourage interest. Such an effect followed, even after it was found that those who favored retrocession were only a small minority in congress. The mere agitation, however, was hurtful in the case of an enterprise that from the outset led but a feeble and precarious existence and was not nurtured by a large influx of people and an expanding trade. For it is quite evident the fear of what congress might do had then, as it has continued to have, an influence on local interests that was real enough, even though the apprehensions created were never realized. More significant, perhaps, than the action in voting down the removal resolution was a single clause at the end of a general act concerning the city of Washington.[1] The language was curiously indefinite, for it appropriated $50,000 to be used "in such repairs and alterations in the capitol and other public buildings as may be necessary for the accommodation of congress in their future sessions and also for keeping in repair the highway between the capitol and other public buildings." But the intent of congress was clearly understood to be a provision for beginning the erection of the south wing of the capitol, and that was done.[2]

Thus early in the relations between congress and the District was the emphasis placed upon the principle which is the recog-

[1] Stats., 2, 236. March 3, 1803.

[2] The significance of such a course was recognized at the time. Thomas Law, in a pamphlet "Observations on the Intended Canal in Washington City," Washington, 1804, p. 7, observes, "Last year Congress, by voting a sum of money for the capitol and by resolving not to alter the plan of the city, banished forever all doubts, and in consequence more houses have been built since that decisive crisis than in any preceding year." Also an article in the *Intelligencer*, May 18, 1807, in favor of opening the canal. "We have not to apprehend," observes the writer, "the capriciousness of an individual, for Congress, notwithstanding bad accommodations and numerous inconveniences, has continued here annually voting appropriations to evince their good will, their stability and the wisdom of their first choice of a central spot."

nized groundwork of judicial interpretation, that in the laws placed on the statute books and not in the debates must be traced the mind of congress.

It is quite evident that Jefferson understood the far-reaching effect of this legislation, for a few days after he had affixed his signature to the bill, in writing to Benjamin H. Latrobe to offer him the place of surveyor of the public buildings, he adds, "I have no doubt congress at the next session will give another $50,000, which will complete that wing inside and out in the year 1804." [1]

The president's forecast proved to be correct, and congress continued its annual appropriations until the south wing was erected and the north wing reconstructed, a period stretching over eight years and ending with the year 1811. He was, however, greatly out of the way as to the time, for it was not until the fall of 1807 that the house was able to meet in the new chamber, a period of some four years.[2] For a year prior to the spring of 1803 there had been no public work going on in Washington. The board of commissioners with their architect or superintendent of public buildings had been abolished, and the federal interests of the city had been intrusted to a superintendent, who succeeded to the powers of the board of commissioners and its empty treasury. He had done nothing, as there had been no new legislation. The coming of Latrobe in such a capacity to the city marked an important epoch in its history, not so much from the personality of the man as because of the public policy he represented. There was no provision in the law for the appointment of an architect or superintendent of building, but Jefferson, with that broad construction of the letter of the law

[1] Letter dated March 6, 1803, and quoted in the History of the United States Capitol, p. 33, and where in subsequent pages the details of the construction of the south wing and the changes in the north are given, together with a discussion of the pamphlet war waged by Latrobe against Dr. Thornton and his design, and also against the members of congress and the newspapers who criticised the work as too slow and too expensive.

[2] The amount of money spent on the south wing alone from 1803 to 1807 was $216,016.

which led him to advise Washington that while the residence law of 1790 did not specifically state a city was to be built, thought the authority to do so was implied in the language of the statute which authorized the president to accept land and provide buildings for the accommodation of the government. So in the first instance a city was planned and laid out, and again thirteen years later Jefferson, three days after he had affixed his signature to a law which merely appropriated a bulk sum for "repairs and alterations in the capitol and other public buildings" and for keeping in repair Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol and the president's house, made the appointment of an architect or superintendent.[1]

Latrobe, to whom he wrote, was no stranger, for in the previous year he had come to the city at the request of the president from his home in Philadelphia, where he was successfully practising his profession as architect and engineer as he had done in his native country of England, in order that he might report on a pet plan of the president's for a dry dock in the city of Washington and supplying it with water. He had stopped in the city on his way to Philadelphia in the year 1798, two years after he had come to this country, and he recorded then his opinion of the north wing, "that while it is faulty in external detail, it is one of the first designs of modern times."[2] After he was placed in charge of the south wing with instructions from Jefferson that he "should deviate as little as possible from the plan approved by General Washington,"[3] he then declared that except a few details, all his ideas of good taste and even of good sense in architecture were shocked by the style of the capitol building.[4] It is not surprising that Dr. Thornton, the author of the design, who was placed at

[1] As the president expressed it in the letter to Latrobe, he revived the office of surveyor of public buildings, but as no such office existed, this use of the word revived is characteristic.

[2] Journal of Latrobe, p. 92. New York, 1905.

[3] A private letter to the individual members of congress on the subject of the public buildings. B. Henry Latrobe. Washington. S. H. Smith. 1806.

[4] The same, p. 18.

the head of the patent office after the board of city commissioners was abolished, was nettled and also grieved when he heard and read Latrobe's rather savage assaults upon his design, for when Latrobe was in the city on the business of the proposed naval dry docks, Dr. Thornton stated Latrobe "often complimented me on the plan of the capitol." [1] As far as the exterior design of the south wing was concerned, Latrobe was helpless, as it must conform to that of the north wing. As to the main feature of the interior, the chamber of the house, he declares, "a respect for the opinion of General Washington produced a positive direction to me that the principal feature of the hall, colonnade and surrounding gallery should be preserved. This I did," he adds, "against my wishes and judgment, reducing the number of columns from thirty-six to twenty-four." [2] He did succeed in changing the elliptical form of the chamber of the house into a room with semicircular ends and straight sides. The acoustics proved to be bad, but this defect was in part remedied by hanging curtains between the stone columns of the colonnades.[3] In spite of the foible of the Thornton affair, Latrobe was a man of ability in his profession as well as having a wide range in the field of knowledge. His merits were recognized, not only in his governmental work, but in the many important private enterprises with which he was connected. For eight years he continued in the public service, with a widening scope of duties. When the damage wrought by the British invasion was to be made good, Latrobe was again called upon, and served for some two years. A month after his appointment Latrobe selected John Lenthal as clerk of the works, or superintendent, an important post in this instance, as the architect was away from the city frequently in connection with his

[1] History of the United States Capitol, p. 35. In an addenda to his pamphlet, p. 4, Latrobe declares that this remark to Thornton "was only one of my polite ambiguities, and I only said so to flatter him into a friendly wish to see me appointed [surveyor of public buildings] for it never was my opinion."

[2] Latrobe's letter to the editor. *Intelligencer*, March 17, 1812.

[3] Latrobe's report, March 25, 1808. American State Papers, Vol. 1, Miscella., p. 719.

duties as engineer of the proposed canal to connect the waters of the Delaware River and Chesapeake Bay.[1]

The summer and fall of 1803 passed, and when the members of the house assembled in December, they met as usual in the temporary brick building erected on a portion of the site of the south wing. After the adjournment of congress in 1804 "the Oven," as it was termed, was removed, and by the middle of summer the walls of the new structure were above the ground. In the course of three years the house, which had been holding its sessions in its first meeting place, the room on the west front of the north wing, was in its new chamber.[2]

It was by no means complete. The woodwork had only received a priming coat of paint. The hot-air furnaces and the odor of fresh paint rendered the air disagreeable, while it was almost impossible for the members to hear what was said.[3]

But money was more abundant than when the north wing was built. Stone columns and brick arches and carved friezes replaced the columns of wood and plaster, and the wooden floor beams and plain walls that were in the latter structure. While this change marked an advance in durable construction, still the period had not been reached in the history of the building when marble was used. The softer and cheaper sandstone was employed in the interior work as well as for the exterior walls, but in the former it was carved with decorative designs, the first seen in an American public building.[4] For this pur-

[1] Mr. Lenthal was killed in September, 1808, by the fall of a brick vault in the supreme court room.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 27, 1807. "The hall of the House of Representatives was on this day opened for the first time," Congress having met in extra session.

[3] In the senate chamber open fireplaces were in use, and at times the room was uncomfortably cold. John Quincy Adams notes in his Memoirs that Jan. 22, 1805, was "excessively cold. In the senate not much attention was paid to the business, most of the members being almost all day at the firesides in the lobby." Vol. 1, p. 337.

[4] Journal of Latrobe, p. 142. It was probably a slip of the pen on the part of Latrobe in preparing a report on the state of the building after the fire when he refers to "the marble columns" in the Senate chamber as burnt to lime by the heat of the flames. There is no other reference to the use of this material in the capitol prior to this period. American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 2, p. 427, Feb. 28, 1817.

pose two Italian sculptors were brought to this country. In the spring of 1806 Giuseppe Franzoni and Giovanni Andrei were at work, the former in carving an eagle in stone that was given a place in the frieze of the house, while he also modelled a statue of Liberty which was placed between the columns of the colonnade back of the speaker's chair.[1] To Andrei fell the work of carving the capitals of the columns and adorning the frieze. Then in the season of 1808–1809 the wooden construction on the east side of the north wing was replaced by arches of brick and with stone work, so that when the British applied the torch to the building, the capitals of the free stone pillars in the basement devised by Latrobe to represent corn-stalks, the "corn cob capitals," as he states they were named by members of congress, were saved from destruction, due to the protection of the arched brick flooring. A radical change was made in the interior plan, as the floor of the senate chamber and its offices was raised from the basement level to that of the first floor. The work began in June, 1808, before the session of the senate closed, and temporary quarters were provided for that body in a room on the same floor, but on the west front under the library. As the room south of the old senate chamber occupied from the beginning by the supreme court and the circuit court of the District was also dismantled, the former met for the 1809 term in the library room, which had been fitted up with rough seats, benches and enclosures for its accommodation.[2] The supreme court adjourned before the senate met in extra session in May, 1809. The temporary arrangement of the library for the court was changed and the room fitted for the use of the senate. By the following winter the new senate chamber was ready, and so was the court room on the basement floor directly under it, so that the term of 1810 was the first held in that room, which became historic as the home

[1] The figure was in plaster. Latrobe's description of the interior. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 30, 1807.

[2] Report of the committee to confer with the surveyor of the public buildings. Feb. 18, 1809. The wooden construction of the interior of the west section of the north wing, and its roof covered with shingles, were not changed.

for so many years of the first tribunal of the land. The circuit court of the District also resumed its sittings in the capitol building after an absence of about a year and a half, occupying, as it had, from the day of its organization, the same room as the supreme court. During the time it was away from the capitol the court held its sessions in the tavern in Carroll Row on 1st Street between East Capitol and A streets, S. E.[1] The clerk's office, which at that period and for many years later also included the office for the recording of deeds, had quarters away from those occupied by the court. Apparently soon after the first change was made in the clerkship, and William Brent succeeded Uriah Forrest, who had died,[2] the office was removed from the western section of the city to Capitol Hill and presumably in the vicinity of the capitol.[3] As far as known, no change was made in the general location until after the invasion of the city.

In the meantime changes had taken place in the personnel of the court. On the 25th of November, 1803, Nicholas Fitzhugh of Fairfax County, Va., was confirmed by the senate to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of James Marshall.[4] After a service of five years the chief judge, William Kilty, was appointed chancellor of Maryland. William Cranch was advanced to his place, and the vacancy on the bench was filled by the appointment of Allen B. Duckett of Maryland.[5] Upon his death some three years later he was succeeded by Buckner Thurston, then forty-six years of age, who at that time had only served about half his term as senator from Kentucky.[6] Judge

[1] Legal notices stating the court room was in Lindsay's and in Long's hotel. *Intelligencer*, June 15, 1808 (a notice in the issue of June 8 gives the usual address) and Feb. 13, 1809, also a notice in the issue of Dec. 27, 1809, that the court room was in the capitol.

[2] Same, July 17, 1805.

[3] Same, May 21, 1806.

[4] The new judge had recently represented his county in the Virginia house of delegates. He served until his death in 1814.

[5] Appointed March 17, 1806, and died in August, 1809. His household furniture and library of law, history and belles lettres were advertised to be sold at public auction at the late residence on K Street, between 26th and 27th streets, N. W. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 11, 1809.

[6] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 18, 1809.

Thurston was a native of Virginia, but when a young man had gone to Kentucky, where he took an active part in public affairs. In the year 1805 he was appointed federal judge of the territory of New Orleans, but he was also chosen to represent the state of Kentucky in the senate of the United States. He accepted the latter place, but gave it up before he had completed his term, in order to take the judicial place in the District. He was succeeded in the senate by Henry Clay.

After the year 1810 no further large appropriations were made for the capitol building, and the two wings, practically completed and connected by a wooden covered way, were left until the return of more peaceful times and an improvement in the public finances, which were being drained to supply the army and the navy and to resist the growing encroachments of England.[1] The building was in this state when it was destroyed in the war of 1812.

Jefferson's confidence in the course that congress would pursue in continuing the work of preparing a suitable place for its deliberations as well as for other public needs in the District was so well grounded that he did not hesitate to use nearly one-fourth of the entire appropriation of 1803 upon the improvement of Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol and the president's house. In addition to the personal supervision which he gave to the work of Latrobe, there can be but little doubt that it was his plan which was carried out in what was done on Pennsylvania Avenue. The broad surface was divided into three sections marked with four rows of trees, an arrangement that suggested the Paris boulevards. In the centre ran the principal road with rows of Lombardy poplars on each side, then two roadways, the outer edges bordered by trees of the same species. Beyond the second row of trees came the gutters, and then the footways extending to the building line. There were no underground drains. The surface water from the side streets and the gutters was carried across the surface of the avenue in broad drains, which in process of time became gullies of irregu-

[1] Report of the committee on the president's message communicating a report of the surveyor of the public buildings. Jan. 11, 1810.

lar depth.[1] In all $11,702 was spent on the avenue at this time.[2]

Nearly thirty years passed, and the avenue remained as Jefferson planned it. No federal money was spent on it except in the year 1807, when the roadway was widened and drains were built. Its maintenance and care was left to the city. But even the large sum for that day expended in 1803–1804 was not sufficient to provide any kind of paving. The surface of the road was covered with gravel, as was done in the case of streets improved by the city authorities. In the summer the dust flew, and in the winter the mud was deep. But the trees flourished and were much admired, although they were not shade trees.

A year had hardly gone after the improvements had been completed, when the first inaugural procession passed up Pennsylvania Avenue, a modest precursor of street pageants that have no equal in this country for elaborateness and striking detail. Jefferson's second inaugural was even simpler in its outward form than the first. It is a singular circumstance so little attention was given to this event that the only contemporary account of Jefferson's going to the capitol is to be found in a personal letter written by a secretary of the English legation. "On the 4th," so the narrative runs, "he proceeded on horseback from the Palace, which is of white stone and the largest building here, and attended by his secretary and groom rode up

[1] It is impossible to state more in detail the work done on Pennsylvania Avenue at this time, as no report was made. During this period the superintendent of the city disbursed all money expended for public purposes in the city, unless, as in the case of the jail, congress otherwise directed. The progress of the work on the public buildings was detailed in annual reports which Mr. Latrobe made to the president and which were transmitted to congress and printed. The superintendent of the city sent his accounts to the treasury, where they were audited. As Latrobe had nothing to do with the Pennsylvania Avenue improvement, only a reference to the execution of the work. Message from the president of the United States transmitting a report of the surveyor of the public buildings. Feb. 22, 1804.

[2] Message from the President of the United States transmitting accounts, stating the several sums spent to date in Washington. Dec. 23, 1806. Report of Thomas Munroe, superintendent of the city.

the long Avenue of Pennsylvania to the Capitol, which is an unfinished rival in stone of the Roman building of that name, and dressed in black and silk stockings delivered a speech etc." [1]

After the delivery of the speech the oath of office was administered, and on leaving the capitol the president was attended "by a large assemblage of members of the legislature, citizens and strangers of distinction, and a procession was formed at the navy yard composed of the several mechanics engaged there, which marched to military music, displaying with considerable taste the various insignia of their profession." [2]

At the president's house a large company assembled to offer their congratulations and good wishes.[3] With the reception the ceremonies of the day came to a close. This function was spoken of by the English observer as a levee, and evidently in some disgust states that "all who chose attended and even towards the close," he adds with what must have been a purely imaginative touch, "blacks and dirty boys who drank his wines and lolled upon his couches before us all."

In striking contrast to the large allotment of the bulk appropriation for Pennsylvania Avenue was the sum expended on the president's house. Less than two thousand dollars was used, and yet the walls of the apartments of the eastern section of the house were still unplastered. The grounds were rough and neglected, temporary wooden steps were at the principal entrances, and the roof leaked badly. There were no outbuildings so necessary at that period for the storing of fuel and

[1] The Two Duchesses. Augustus Foster to Frederick Foster. Washington, July 1, 1805, p. 229. Mr. Foster omits to state that the inaugural ceremonies were held in the senate chamber.

[2] *Intelligencer*, March 6, 1805. Henry Adams states, Jefferson "appeared at the capitol escorted with due formalities by a procession of militia men and other citizens." Vol. 3, p. 1.

[3] Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 1, p. 373. It is probable the long strain of the impeachment trial of Judge Chase, which had occupied the time and attention of the senate since the beginning of the year and had ended only on March 1, had something to do with the lack of interest displayed in the inauguration. Mr. Adams records March 3, "that Congress was obliged to sit this day, though a Sunday," owing to the delay in the business caused by the trial.

other domestic supplies, and in fact the house lacked many of the conveniences then looked upon as essential for comfortable living. However, the next year the slate roof was replaced by one of sheet iron and one of the bedrooms was finished.[1] Each year as the work went on at the capitol something was done at the president's house to make it more livable, and as Latrobe was in charge of both buildings there was no official friction. After the building had been made secure from the weather in the year 1804, the following season witnessed the erection of what were termed "the offices," a long range of one-story structures on either side of the main building, that on the west side forming the foundations of the terrace of to-day. These wings contained a meat house, cellar for liquors, coals and wood and privies.[2] At the end of the eastern range a stable was erected in the year 1806, which was intended only for temporary use and to remedy the inconvenience of the one located at such a distance as the southeast corner of 14th and G streets, N. W.[3] It was not until the fourth year after a beginning was made to complete the house that attention was given to the improvement of the grounds. Then the post and rail fence was replaced in part by a low stone wall, and also a portion of the grounds was levelled.[4] At this time a more direct communication between the capitol and the executive departments was made by opening a road from 15th Street, south of the treasury office and the president's house to 17th Street. The road passed just south of the new stone wall, and is preserved to-day in the road that nearly bisects the lawn south of the house. In later years the vegetable garden was south of the wall and road. During the year 1808 the wall about the grounds was practically

[1] Message of the President of United States communicating a report of the surveyor of public buildings, Dec. 6, 1804.

[2] Same, Dec. 27, 1805. The colonnade that faced them was not supplied until 1807. The eastern wing was removed about the year 1870.

[3] Same, Dec. 15, 1806. A carriage house near the stables was built in 1809.

[4] Same, March 25, 1808. Also in American State Papers, Vol. 1, p. 719.

completed, and a flight of stone steps, a bridge and a platform over the area of the north front were made.[1] Attention was given to the grounds the following year, and that work, as well as various minor improvements in the house, left the property in the state when it was destroyed. The final report of Latrobe on the condition of the capitol and the president's house was made at the close of the year 1809 and at the beginning of his last term of service for that period.[2] The arrangement of the principal floor of the house is shown in a drawing made by Latrobe in 1803 and now preserved in the library of congress. It was then as Hoban planned it and as it stands to-day, restored to the original form in the year 1902. But Latrobe felt he could improve on Hoban's plan, and accordingly in the year 1807 prepared a sketch which he believed would solve the objections he said were raised against the present arrangement of the space and make it more suitable for its double use as a public building and for the accommodation of a family.[3] There is no further reference to the proposed changes. It is interesting to note that in the same year Latrobe prepared his plan for the alterations in the interior plan of the president's house, he also made a design for the centre portion of the capitol building. On each front he proposed to have an extensive portico and on the east a flight of steps leading to the principal story.[4] But these steps were within a pillared portico and not entirely on the exterior of the building as in the design which was eventually carried out.

It was while the senate was still occupying the library room that the inauguration of James Madison was held in 1809.

[1] Report of the surveyor of the public buildings, Dec. 21, 1808.

[2] American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 2, p. 16.

[3] Report of the committee appointed to ascertain the expenditures and probable estimates in relation to the public buildings, Dec. 21, 1808. The plan referred to in the report of Latrobe and made a part of the committee report is in the library of congress and appears together with his drawing of the then existing arrangement in the report Restoration of the White House. 57th Cong., 2d Sess., Senate No. 197.

[4] The same. This design is reproduced in the History of the Capitol, p. 44.

For the first time in the new city the oath of office to the incoming president was not administered in the senate chamber. The new room of the house of representatives, then in use for but a little more than a year, was chosen as the stage for the event which marked the close of the public career of Thomas Jefferson and the beginning of what proved to be eight years of service of James Madison, who was regarded as Jefferson's choice. The function, so simple in its official detail, had already begun to draw to it people eager to see and to hear. "For many days before," so runs the chronicle of the day,[1] "citizens from the adjacent and even remote states had been pouring into the city until its capacity of accommodation was strained to the utmost." Clearly the library room in the west front would be too small to accommodate even a reasonable proportion of the thronging crowds, and no doubt the temporary fittings in a plain room, contrasting with the dignity and the richness of the setting of the new chamber of the house, further emphasized the necessity of making the change.

As the day dawned on the 4th of March, a federal salute was fired from the guns at the navy yard and at Fort Warburton, as Fort Washington was then called. Several hours before noon, the time fixed for the ceremony at the capitol, the house was filled, and as the historian of the event looked out from the windows of the capitol and saw the people gathered about the building, they seemed to him to number 10,000. The president-elect was escorted from his house on the site of 1333–1335 F Street, N.W., where he had lived as secretary of state, by the troops of cavalry of Washington and Georgetown. Upon his return from the capitol President Madison had the escort of nine voluntary military companies of the District. When he reached his home, he held a large reception and refreshments were served.[2]

In the evening the festivities were for the first time in the history of such events continued, and took the form of a ball. Under the heading, "Inauguration ball," a notice had appeared

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 6, 1809.
[2] Adams Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 546.

in the *Intelligencer* some days previously,[1] that "a dancing assembly will be held on the 4th inst., at Mr. Long's Hotel. Tickets to be obtained at the bar on application to a manager."[2] But the retiring president was not overlooked. He occupied a seat in the house on the right of the chair, and when the speech had been delivered, Jefferson joined with the throng of citizens who called on the new president at his home. That duty performed, Jefferson returned to the president's house, which he continued to occupy for some days before he went to his Virginia home. Here he held a large reception, and in the evening attended the ball, where he mingled with the throng, which was said to number four hundred and of which Mrs. Madison was the centre, as she had been of social affairs in the city and continued to be for many years later.[3] Among those who called on Jefferson on inaugural day were delegations representing citizens of Washington and Georgetown, expressing to him their good wishes.[4]

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 1, 1809.

[2] The list of managers appended to this notice contained the following names: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Thos. Tingey | William Brent |
| John P. Van Ness | John Graham |
| Franklin Wharton | A. Henderson |
| Daniel Carroll | James Eakin |
| John Tayloe | John Lacy |
| James H. Blake | Isaac A. Coles |

N. B. The dancing will commence at 7 o'clock precisely.

[3] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 60. Mrs. Smith says the dancing continued until 12 o'clock, when the music ceased. According to the account in the *Intelligencer*, the list of invited guests was confined to the president, the ex-president and the foreign ministers.

[4] *Intelligencer*, March 6, 1809.

# CHAPTER XVIII

## THE CITY GOVERNMENT AND A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

In addition to the claims made by the advocates of retrocession as to what they intended to do, the interests of the city received another serious check through a motion made in the house, which, however, was not adopted, to concentrate the public buildings.[1] A change in the location of the public buildings was looked upon then as almost as disastrous as a removal, for property values in the vicinity of public reservations were determined largely by such proximity.[2] A judgment on congress in its dealings with the District was expressed by A. B. Woodward in the last of the series of essays on the government of the District. The essay was finished the last day of January, 1803, and while then all hope had not been abandoned that congress might still provide a general government for the District, yet it had not done so and no notice had been taken by that body of what Mr. Woodward regarded as of the most vital consequence to the District, and that was an amendment to the constitution so as to enable the District to have representatives on the floor of congress as well as in the electoral college.

Congress had been content with providing a municipal government for Washington city, which Mr. Woodward had not advocated, and therefore it would only be human if in his last contribution to the discussion of the proper form of government for the District and its place in the federal system, there should have crept in some bitterness of spirit. "The whole

[1] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 494. Report of Committee, Feb. 13, 1803. American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 344.

[2] Considerations on the government of the territory of Columbia, No. 8, p. 21.

history of the city of Washington," he exclaims, "exhibits the effects of governmental inconstancy."

One result, as he points out, is that most of the individuals, who have trusted to their expectations, have been the victims of their own confidence. Many of these men have been ruined, he asserted, while the resources of others are now mostly unproductive. The records of the Maryland court, he asserted, as well as those of the circuit court of the District, bear ample evidence of the financial straits to which a number of the men most largely interested as property holders in the city were reduced at this period.

Restoring the District to the states which had ceded it, even including the ground where the public buildings had been erected, although in the discussion of the second retrocession measure it was proposed to except the city of Washington, was the only immediate solution offered in congress of the political problem presented by the District. But such a course had the approval of but few. On the other hand there were those who predicted a bright future for the District, and some went so far as to assert that after a while, when population increased, then the District might be given a place in the federal system.

The unreality of the descriptive term of slaves, applied in the course of the discussion in the house to the citizens of the District, was pointed out by a debater, who exclaimed that one might almost expect from what was said, "to have his ears assailed with the harsh, grating sound of fetters and the clanking of chains on going out into the streets." On the contrary, he assured his hearers, he found the citizens contented and happy, pursuing their usual avocations and enjoying the fruit of their labor under the protection of mild and equable laws.[1]

The emphasis placed on the loss of political rights gives that phase of opposition the chief prominence in the first years of the agitation, which began in February, 1803, and ended two years later. When the agitation was again resumed in 1808, the point of attack was shifted. It then centred upon the

[1] Annals of Congress, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., January, 1805, p. 933.

inconvenience to members of congress in having to live in a city like Washington, so destitute, was the complaint, of comforts and facilities and yet where the cost of living was so high. The resolution upon which a debate running through a week was based came frankly to the point by providing that the seat of government be removed to Philadelphia.[1] It was urged by one speaker in favor of such a course that the city was fifteen years old, and was still in its infancy. The plan on which it is laid out was criticised as impracticable. All the inhabitants, it was urged, if gathered in one spot, would not be able to pay the expenses of paving, lighting and watching the avenues and streets, because of their great width. How long, asked another speaker, are we to go on through dirt and mire before we are able to perceive that Washington can never be a city?

But in addition to these material considerations another speaker was unwilling further to witness such an exhibition of American debasement as citizens without the right of franchise, and more especially, when, as in the case of District residents, they were willing enough to yield that privilege in consideration of the pecuniary advantages derived from being near the government. However, it was the hopeless prospects of the place that were dwelt on and emphasized by most of the opposition. All around, it was asserted, are premature symptoms of decay, so many houses built, not inhabited but tumbling into ruins. A resemblance to the ruins of Palmyra was traced by a speaker in the appearance of Morris Village, as the cluster of unfinished houses built by Morris and his associates was termed. The principal business of the place, it was asserted, was the keeping of boarding-houses. The debate became discursive, and finally the house refused to continue it and so the subject was dropped without a vote having been reached, and it was not taken up in congress again

[1] Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 1st Sess., 1807–1808, p. 1531. There was only one reference to the subject during the ninth congress, when a resolution to retrocede the jurisdiction to Maryland and Virginia was offered, but no further action was taken. Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 457.

for more than six years or until after the destruction of the city by the British.[1] It is probable the author of a communication to the *Intelligencer* some fifteen years after the first stage of the removal agitation had been passed expressed the contemporary opinion when he wrote that "the attempts to remove the capital would have been successful if the adversaries of Washington could have agreed among themselves as to the place of their future residence and if it had not been distinctly understood that President Jefferson and President Madison, under whose administrations these attempts were made, were determined to place their veto on such an act." [2] No doubt the attacks on the city, and more especially the criticisms of its growth and development, so much slower than had been anticipated, were influential with the city council in directing in the year 1803, and then again in 1807, the city treasurer, who was also the collector of taxes, to take a census of the city, the only period in its history when two enumerations of the inhabitants were made in a census decade. It was shown, by the count of 1803, that the city contained 4352 souls, an increase of 1142 since the census of 1800, while four years later the total was 5652, an increase of 1300.[3]

Two days after the act of May 3, 1802, became a law, providing a corporate form of government for the city of Washington, a call appeared in the *Intelligencer* for a meeting of mechanics "to consult upon proper characters" for members of the city council. This was followed by notices to the citizens generally for meetings for a similar purpose, and also through the same medium lists of names of citizens were submitted for the approval of their peers on the day of the election. A more direct method was adopted by holding meetings,

[1] The editor of the *Alexandria Daily Gazette*, in commenting upon the federal census of Washington just completed, showing a population of 8620, stated: "It has been about seven years in doubling. One cause of the slow growth has been the iniquitous proposition to remove the seat of government. We presume that this question has gone to sleep forever." Reprinted in the *Intelligencer*, Nov. 24, 1810.

[2] *Intelligencer*, March 11, 1824.

[3] The same, May 9, 1804, and Sept. 30, 1808. The census of 1800 gave 3120 as the population of Washington.

one in the eastern section of the city, and one in the western, when tickets having six names each were approved. When the ballots were prepared, these names were arranged under the heading, "Republican ticket," and "Federal ticket," so that the results of the election held June 7, 1802, gave an equal representation in the council, not only to the two sections but to the two political parties.[1]

The name of Robert Brent appeared on some of the tickets offered for the approval of the voters, but three days before the election was held, President Jefferson appointed Mr. Brent mayor of the city and another name was substituted.[2] Mr. Brent continued by annual presidential appointments, seven times by Jefferson and three times by Madison, to fill that office until, by the charter of 1812, congress made the office elective in the city council. But four years previously he had been made paymaster-general of the army and six years before he had been appointed judge of the orphans' court, to succeed William Hammond Dorsey, and held the position until the year 1814. For more than one half of the period of ten years that Mr. Brent was at the head of the affairs of the city he was discharging the duties of judge of the orphans' court, and for four years of that time, in addition, he was paymaster of the army. As his letters to President Jefferson show[3] when first tendered these salaried places, he felt that it would be proper, on account of the probable demands on his time, that some one else be given the mayoralty. This suggestion was not acted upon by the president. This feeling wore away by 1812, when congress made the office of mayor elective by the city council, for Mr. Brent was a candidate, and on the tenth ballot, having received the same number of votes as Daniel Rapine, lots were drawn, as required by law, and Mr. Rapine was declared the choice.[4] The following year Mr. Brent and

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 9, 1802. The total vote was 233.

[2] The same, June 4, 1802. Notley Young, the father-in-law of Mr. Brent and one of the original proprietors, died March 23, 1802. *Intelligencer*, March 24, 1802.

[3] Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2, p. 241. Robert Brent, first mayor of Washington. J. D. Morgan, M.D.

[4] *Intelligencer*, June 9, 1812.

Mr. Rapine were again opposed, but after the third ballot the name of the former was withdrawn and that of Dr. James W. Blake substituted. The vote was again a tie and the choice by lot fell upon Dr. Blake.[1]

During the entire period of his service as mayor, Mr. Brent received no salary, in spite of what appears to be a very suggestive clause in the second law, passed by congress, Feb. 24, 1804, granting corporate powers, which read, "and to give such compensation to the mayor of the city as they may deem fit." As soon, however, as the office ceased to be federal, and was filled by the city council, then a salary was provided which for the first year was $400, but the next year was increased to $500.[2] Party lines, however, were not drawn as strictly as sectional lines. One of the newly elected city councilmen, whose name was on the Federal ticket, stated in a newspaper communication that while he was indebted to the Federal party for his election, and while he was not a party man, yet "his honest convictions make him wish that the Federalists may never regain their ascendancy in this government." He added that owing to this state of his opinions, so candidly expressed, he was ready to retire from the public service at any time.[3] However, A. B. Woodward, a friend of the president, who was the author of the card, was not called upon to resign, and so he served out the year for which he had been elected.

In order that there might be no misunderstanding on the part of the citizens as to their status, under the law incorporating the city and also with an eye to the collection of taxes in arrears, Washington Boyd, the tax collector of the levy court, gave notice that unless citizens paid their taxes they would be deprived of the right of voting.

As the charter of the city permitted, the division of the

[1] Journal Board of Aldermen, Vol. 5, June 14, 1813.

[2] The earliest record of a salary paid to the mayor of Alexandria is the ordinance of March 27, 1804, when $300 and fees subsequently reduced to $200 and fees were paid. By an ordinance of Oct. 11, 1803, the Georgetown council fixed the mayor's salary at $300, and no change was made in either case for a number of years.

[3] *Intelligencer*, June 14, 1802.

territory of the city into three wards, as made by the levy court, was adopted by the judges of election, who were three justices of the peace, members of the levy court, and when the city government was organized the expense of making a new assessment for taxation was avoided by accepting that made by the levy court.[1] Washington Boyd, the tax collector of the levy court, was appointed by the mayor treasurer of the city.[2] The rate of taxation, both personal and real, was twenty-five cents on every hundred dollars of assessed value, the latter being considered about one half of the real value. The total assessment was $1,569,600, while the amount of the tax due was $3924,[3] but only $1431.03 was collected.[4] This large percentage of uncollected taxes was mainly owing to the immunity conferred on the owners of unimproved property by the charter of the city, which forbade the city authorities to pass any law to sell such property for taxes. An attempt to lessen the effect of such a privilege was made by the city council, by providing in the very first tax law, as was the practice in Maryland, for the seizure of the personal property of such delinquents residing in the city and for the usual process of recovering a debt in case of non-residents. But such a method was slow and uncertain, so that in effect the large part of the property in the city liable to taxation was freed from taxation.

[1] The first division of the area of the city into wards which was made by the levy court in 1801 used Pennsylvania Avenue as the dividing line west of 6th Street, W., the first ward comprising all the territory to the south, while to the north was the second ward. All the area east of 6th Street was included in the third ward. This arrangement was changed by the ordinance of April 17, 1806, when four wards were created stretching in rectangular form through the city from north to south.

The earlier ward division was similar to the Georgetown system established by the ordinance of that corporation of Oct. 10, 1796. M Street was the dividing line between the first and second wards comprising the town area east of 32d Street and the third and fourth wards to the west.

[2] *Intelligencer*, May 25, 1803.

[3] Same, May 25, 1803. The treasurer was directed by ordinance of July 14 to make a new assessment, and then the valuation aggregated $2,364,800, which is stated was based on the real value.

[4] Same, June 1, 1803. Report of the joint committee of the city council.

A writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of June 1, 1804, asserts that this provision of the charter, as well as one limiting the franchise, were designed by the party opposed to the administration to render abortive the entire charter. It was not until the passage of the law of May 4, 1812, that the discrimination in favor of unimproved property was removed. The taxes, however, were not wiped out, because the property could not be sold to pay them. They continued to accumulate, and besides each year the estimates of the city revenue included of course the amount of the uncollected taxes. The city council early drifted into the habit of basing its appropriations upon what was due rather than upon the actual collections. In fact, the city debt had its beginning in the very first year of the existence of the corporation.

This deficiency was not a great sum, amounting only to $200, but that was nearly twelve per cent of the entire revenue.[1] Congress, by the law of incorporation, conferred on the city council the right "to lay and collect taxes," and in pursuance of that authority the city council imposed a tax upon personal as well as upon real property. In this particular, the custom of the day and of the locality on the Maryland side of the Potomac was followed.[2] For in Georgetown both classes of property were taxed. The exemptions of the Georgetown tax law included churches, burying grounds, colleges, schools, articles of merchandise, tools and implements of mechanics. The list of exceptions in the Washington law included the above except the last two, but also provided for what suggests conditions of an agricultural community, rather than those of a town as the crop and produce of the land were excepted. Merchandise and tools were taxed in Washington, provided the

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1803. Report on the finances of the city by the joint committee of the city council. See also criticism of the financial policy of the first council and a defence in the *Intelligencer*, May 23 and 25, 1803.

[2] An ordinance of the corporation of Georgetown for making a new assessment of real and personal property, April 19, 1808. Ordinances of the Corporation of Georgetown, p. 54, Georgetown, James C. Dunn, 1821. This is the earliest tax ordinance of Georgetown that has been preserved.

owners were not otherwise assessed, but then the assessment in such cases was not to exceed $80.[1] This provision was no doubt framed in the interests of an increased revenue, with the further intent of making available as voters those outside of the class of real estate owners, although the practice was followed of not placing on the assessment list the names of citizens whose personal property was not valued above $100. Another exemption was worded, "except property belonging to the United States," which illustrates the current lack of clearness on the subject of public ownership. However, freedom of government property from taxation was not judicially affirmed until more than a decade and a half later.[2] Besides paying municipal taxes the citizens of Washington for the first two years of their city government also paid taxes assessed by the levy court for the support of the poor of the county, for the improvement of county roads, bridges, etc. But the next congress granted the relief asked for in a memorial from the city council,[3] and the levy court was deprived of the power of imposing any tax on the inhabitants of the city of Washington.[4] In fact, the wishes of the citizens at that time relative to modifications in the city charter were generally granted by the national legislature, except that no change whatever was made in the franchise privilege in response to the request that all restrictions be removed and what is known as manhood suffrage be established.[5] To what extent the attitude of the city fathers was influenced by the current sentiment in the adjoining state of Maryland, it is of course impossible to determine, but no doubt at that time the movement had started which culminated in 1810 in citizens of Maryland securing white manhood suffrage. It was not until thirty-eight years later that a similar extension of the franchise was authorized

[1] Acts of the corporation of the city of Washington passed by the first council, Washington, 1803.

[2] McCullough *vs.* Maryland, 4 Wheaton 314 (1819). For an account of the course of the states in regard to taxing government property see Van Brocklin *vs.* Anderson *et al.* 117 U. S. 151 (1885).

[3] *Intelligencer*, Dec., 24, 1802.

[4] Law of Feb. 24, 1804.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1802.

by congress in the District.[1] There is no record that this recommendation of the city council created any comment in congress where so much had been said of the rights of man and the importance of preserving them to the citizens of the District. It is curious to note in this first official report to congress of the concerns of the city under local control, the notion that its affairs were not merely of local, but of general, interest. For the members of the city council spoke of "the arduous operation of so conducting its affairs, as to ensure those expectations which are justly indulged of the metropolis of the United States." In spite of the fact that the entire city had but 233 voters and the budget for the year was less than $2000, it was none the less expected both by the citizens and to a large extent by congress that the city government would line up to the standard of what might be supposed was that of the capital of the United States. The surroundings of the local legislators for the first year, when they met officially, contributed no doubt to such a conception, for the city council met and organized at the capitol. The same roof that sheltered the congress of the United States protected also the city fathers, as in their subsequent sessions they deliberated upon the business of the infant city.[2] In this connection it is significant that the first enactment of the city council provided for the adoption of a design for a seal for the city of Washington to consist of "a representation of an edifice supported on sixteen columns," the latter being the number of states in the Union. The seal was made, and also an appropriation of $100 to pay for it.[3]

[1] By the act of May 17, 1848, all restrictions on the franchise of white citizens were removed except the requirement to pay the school tax of $1 per year.

[2] The second city council met in a house on the east side of 12th Street, just south of Pennsylvania Avenue. *Intelligencer*, June 13, 1803. Two years later the council met in the building erected by the two Masonic lodges on the west side of 11th Street just north of C Street, N. W. (lot 1, Square 323), where it remained until the year 1820. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 23, 1805.

[3] There is no record that either the corporations of Georgetown or Alexandria found that a corporate seal of such elaborate character was essential.

The city was laid out, and as far as the character at least of the two principal public buildings was concerned, built on a scale that was federal in magnitude and grandeur. To round out such a conception of the new district, it was at first proposed to provide a government for the entire ten-mile square that would be at once comprehensive in its scope and dignified in its details. But all that was abandoned. An ordinary municipal government, except of course the features of federal representation, was provided for the city of Washington, but with no provision for financial resources beyond the usual revenues of such a government.

With this disposition of the matter congress was apparently satisfied. The citizens of the new city certainly were, if their views were fairly represented by a committee of the city council in a memorial to congress some six months after the city government had been established.

"The investiture of the people of the city of Washington," the memorial states, "with the political rights of regulating their own local affairs, is a measure so necessary and of such inestimable consequence to their welfare that the law which confers it in the judgment of your memorialists should become permanent."[1] Congress did not make the charter permanent, but by the law of February 24, 1804, continued it in force for fifteen years. In spite, however, of the assurances of the memorialists of "the inestimable consequences to their welfare" of the city government, there were citizens who still felt that something ought to be done about securing a general government for the District. A meeting was called.[2]

But the action taken, as described by a contemporary, was at best equivocal,[3] as congress was merely asked to grant authority for holding a delegated convention in the District to determine the expediency of such a measure.

While it is quite evident there was at that time, as had been

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1802.

[2] Same, Jan. 10 and 14, 1803.

[3] Same, Feb. 21, 1803. In this and subsequent issues the subject of a territorial government was discussed.

the case all along, a wide divergence of opinion as to the desirability of a form of government for the entire District, yet such a system, whatever its character might be, was not to take the place of the municipal governments. The government of the towns and that of the entire territory were distinct questions, so that it is entirely consistent that satisfaction with the provision for the city government of Washington might exist in the same mind with dissatisfaction with the course of congress in the management of the District as a whole.

It was also apparently not unusual for District citizens to grumble about the shortcomings of congress in discharging its legislative functions for the District. The following extract from a letter written by a member of congress to a friend in the District, printed in the *Intelligencer* of March 11, 1803, has a familiar sound. "I am sorry for the dissatisfaction of some of your neighbors because they did not get what they asked from congress. Considerate men will reflect that congress had to legislate for the whole United States as well as for the District of Columbia; that most of the members were entirely ignorant of your local affairs, but above all that there was seldom anything like unanimity among yourselves on the subject of your wants."

In another respect the municipality of Washington showed a sense of its importance in directing the printing of five hundred copies of the ordinances passed by the first council.[1] The practice thus begun was continued each year during the sixty-nine years of the existence of this form of government.[2]

A more striking instance of Washington in the minds of the citizens as a national centre may be found in the reasons given for making as a charge upon the revenue derived from taxation

[1] Act of May 25, 1803.

[2] The Georgetown corporation did not begin the annual printing of its ordinances until the year 1830, and then did not continue with regularity. The ordinances of the years 1826–1829 were printed in 1829, and some ten years later a collection of the ordinances for 1821–1826 was published. A collection of the corporation laws was printed in 1811 and one in 1821. The Alexandria corporation spent no money in printing session laws but collections of laws were issued, the first appearing in 1811 and subsequent publications in 1821 and 1844.

the cost of the education of the children of the poor. Such a feature of municipal government was favored by the first city council, and in response to a specific request, congress gave authority in the enlarged city charter granted in the year 1804 "to provide for the establishment and superintendence of public schools."[1] The next council took the matter up and a resolution providing for such schools was referred to a joint committee of the two bodies. A favorable report was presented, but as enough members could not be secured to form a quorum until too late in the session, no action was taken.[2] When a new council convened, consideration of the school bill was resumed. It passed the first chamber by a unanimous vote, but was lost in the second chamber by one vote.[3]

This action led to public criticism, and the opponent of the measure felt called upon through the same medium to defend his course.[4] He stated he was opposed to taking such a large sum as $1500 from the scanty revenues of the city for school purposes. In his opinion the money could be more usefully employed in street improvements and in erecting and repairing bridges. This was the situation the middle of August, but by the following December he had changed his mind, and on the fifth of that month the school ordinance was passed.

Such a measure, limited as it was to providing at public expense for the education of children whose parents and guardians were unable to assume the burden, was for that day and section of the country a radical departure. Public schools or schools supported by public taxation were scarcely known in this country at this period, outside of New England. There were no public schools in New York City or in Philadelphia, or in the southern states. "Poor schools," as they were called, were not unknown, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century a school of that sort was maintained in Alexandria, but they were supported by public-spirited citizens. It was not until

[1] Memorial of the city council to Congress, *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1802.

[2] Report of the joint committee, *Intelligencer*, June 29, 1804.

[3] Same, Aug. 17, 1804. Analysis of the vote on the school bill.

[4] Same, Aug. 22, 1804.

the year 1811 that the public funds of the corporation of Georgetown were used for school purposes. At that time a school was opened by an association of citizens on the Lancaster plan, the first to be established in this country. The building was erected on 28th Street, between M and Olive streets, with money supplied by the association, while the corporation made an annual appropriation to defray the tuition of poor pupils.[1] The principal of public aid to schools was recognized as early as 1807 in Alexandria, for in that year the trustees of the Alexandria Academy asked congress to grant to that institution all escheats arising within the jurisdiction of the Alexandria County court and all fines not otherwise appropriated. But this was not done. A few years later, when the bill to incorporate the Bank of Alexandria was before the house, an amendment was offered, which was not adopted, to impose a tax of one per cent on the capital stock to be paid to the corporation of Alexandria for the support of free schools. This was in 1811, and five years later the city council made an appropriation to defray the tuition of poor scholars in the Lancaster school opened in that city. Subsequently the school fund was extended to cover the cost of the fuel used in the schoolhouse. By a later law the attendance was limited to those whose tuition was paid or to poor scholars.[2] Some five years after the Washington school system had been established, the residents of Washington County felt the need of more general school opportunities, as is manifest by a petition of the inhabitants, with whom residents of the city joined, asking congress that the Maryland tax of four dollars on marriages be revived and put in force in the county, and the proceeds devoted to schools. But a bill for that purpose was defeated, mainly from the sentiment against such a tax.[3]

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 1 and June 29, 1811. See also The British System of Education, to which is added a report of the trustees of the Lancaster school at Georgetown, Col., Washington, 1812.

[2] Laws of the corporation of Alexandria, March 21, 1816. In the year 1810 Georgetown had a population of 4948, while Alexandria had 7227 and Washington 8208.

[3] Annals of Congress, 11th Cong., 1st and 2d Sess., Dec. 19, 1811,

The school scheme of Washington attempted a merging of the pay or private school with the poor school, the latter to be maintained by public taxation.

The motives which led to what was at that day a progressive step on the part of a community just established [1] and of limited financial resources are set forth in the report of the committee of the council accompanying the draft of the school bill. There is but one opinion in this country, the report stated, as to the importance of education, and there is no need of argument on behalf of a truth so universally received.

In addition to this general consideration there are others of a local or peculiar character. The city of Washington, it was asserted, as the permanent residence of the government, should feel every motive of honest pride in imparting to her citizens the traits of honesty, industry and intelligence, the fruits of education. Then next in importance is the advancement of the arts and the sciences, and what point is better fitted for their nurture than the metropolis of the nation, for it is there that "we shall always command in our public councils the first school of legislation; in the administration of the government the best specimens of executive talent and in the tribunals of justice the brightest display of judicial knowledge, while the navy will necessarily foster institutions well adapted to improvement in nautical tactics and the ample reservations of public grounds will be accommodated to the extension of botanical and natural researches."

The committee believed that these and many other considerations point out the city of Washington "as the most, perhaps the only, appropriate position for that distinguished seminary of learning" which it foresaw would at some future day come into existence and which would form the appropriate capstone of the institution which they desired to establish. For the committee felt "but little doubt of the practicability of immedi-

p. 559. More than half a century elapsed before this portion of the District was provided with public schools.

[1] A year after the schools were opened the population of Washington was 5652.

ately connecting with the primary schools those of a higher grade, and of these, being soon added, those of the first order."

Then advancing a doctrine of civic duty and of civic rights which had no practical examples in that day outside of New England, the report asserted the moral obligation of every community as a community to provide for the education of the poor. The recommendation therefore followed of the setting aside for such a purpose the proceeds of taxes "on articles rarely of necessity, as the use of which depending upon every man's inclination will render the payment in a great measure a voluntary act."

The taxes proposed by the committee and directed by the city law to be used for school purposes were those laid on slaves, dogs, licenses for carriages and hacks, for ordinaries and taverns, for retailing wines and spirituous liquors, for billiard tables, for theatrical and other public amusements, and for hawkers and pedlers.[1] The amount to be paid the school board was not to exceed $1500. Appended to the school report as published in the *Intelligencer* of June 29, and July 6, 1804, was a bill, which was enacted into law by the city council with only minor changes and approved Dec. 5, 1804. The entire management of the schools by this measure was intrusted to a board of trustees consisting of thirteen members, seven of whom were to be elected by the city council and six by the contributors to the fund which was to supplement what was evidently regarded as an inadequate provision. In the meantime a committee of three was appointed by the council on the same day the mayor of the city affixed his signature to the measure, for the purpose of receiving subscriptions. This

[1] Report of joint committee city council on the treasurer's accounts gives the receipts of these taxes for the year 1804–1805 as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Retail and ordinary licenses | $1252 |
| Hackney and pleasurable carriages | 220 |
| Billiard tables | 50 |
| Theatrical license | 16 |
| Slave and dog tax | 103 |
| Hawkers and pedlers | 70 |
| | $1711 |

*Intelligencer*, May 29, 1805.

was done by a personal canvass, and by the following spring such progress had been made that the committee decided to make a report to the council, preliminary to the organization of the institution [1] which was completed by the end of July. On the 17th of that month the subscribers to the fund elected six trustees as follows: Thomas Munroe, Gabriel Duvall, Thomas Tingey, Robert Brent, Samuel H. Smith and William Cranch; while in joint session on the 22d of July the two chambers of the city council chose seven trustees as follows: Thomas Jefferson, John Tayloe, Nicholas King, John Dempsie, Joseph Bromley — vice James Barry declined, George Blagden and William Brent.[2] The subscriptions to the school fund secured by the committee amounted to $3782. There were 191 subscribers, and among them was the name of the president of the United States, who subscribed $200.[3] The funds contributed by individuals were to be used in building schoolhouses, while the municipal money was to be devoted to paying the tuition of pupils unable to meet that expense, to provide school furniture and also paper, pen and ink for the poor pupils. It is evident there were differences of opinion among the subscribers as to financing the undertaking, and with the view of harmonizing the divergent views the prospect was held out of lessening the burden by making an application to congress to secure for the Washington schools an appropriation of public lands as was done in the case of the territories.[4] It may be concluded that the discontent was not allayed, as less than half of the subscriptions were paid.

Ten days after the members of the board of trustees of "the permanent institution for the education of youth in the city of Washington," as it was termed in the title of the ordi-

[1] *Intelligencer*, April 29, 1805.

[2] The same, July 17, 1805. Journal common council, Vol. 1, July 22, 1805.

[3] The same, July 8, 1805, giving the list of subscribers.

[4] The same, July 12, 1805. Also the same, Aug. 1, 1806. An application to congress for aid was promptly made by the trustees, and the effort was renewed from time to time, but without result. Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 334.

nance establishing it, were chosen, a meeting was held in the court-room in the capitol. The mayor of the city, Robert Brent, who was a member of the board, presided and was made vice-president. Thomas Jefferson was elected president and accepted as far as other "duties of paramount obligation will permit." [1] A report was submitted by a committee outlining the measures for carrying into effect the act, and this report was adopted at the meeting held the following month.[2]

While pointing out that the provisions of the act "contemplate the establishment of an institution in which every species of knowledge essential to the liberal education of youth may eventually be acquired," and that the three great departments — schools, colleges and universities — are included, yet, "as the benefits of the schools being in a great measure local, they will probably derive their principal support from the District," while those of the college and university, being more general, "may justify the hope of national assistance," the report recognized the importance of the board undertaking nothing which it does not actually possess the means of effecting. "It ought not to be forgotten," the report continued, "that most of the plans projected in the city have failed principally from undertaking them before the necessary means were acquired."

The committee, acting upon this prudent policy, turned its face from what was evidently an alluring prospect in the wider scope of the subject — although the board at its third meeting, Nov. 4, 1805, prepared a memorial to congress, suggesting the authorization of a lottery for the proposed university — and agreed upon a plan for starting elementary schools. But the ambitious tendency was so strong that in the following year a committee was instructed to inquire into the expediency of

[1] Jefferson to Robert Brent, Monticello, Va., Aug. 14, 1805. *Intelligencer*, Jan. 29, 1806. Jefferson was continued a member of the board for two years or until about the close of his term as president of the United States. There is no record of his having attended a meeting of the trustees.

[2] Manuscript journal of the proceedings of the board of trustees from Aug. 5, 1805, to July 6, 1818. Library of Congress. Excerpts from this journal were published in the Public School report for 1874–1875.

establishing a city library in connection with the schools. The report when made was laid on the table and no further action was taken. For the present at least, the board decided, two schools would be sufficient, one in the eastern section of the city and one in the western. There were to be two classes of pupils, poor and pay.

The former were to be taught "reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic and such branches of mathematics as may qualify them for the professions they are intended to follow, and they shall receive such other instruction as is given to pay pupils as the board may from time to time direct, and pay pupils shall besides be instructed in geography and in the Latin language." [1] A further class distinction was made in the provision that paper, pens and ink be furnished free to "poor children," which is the term usually employed in the journal, although in the minutes of one of the early meetings there is an entry of "a list of paupers," reported from one of the schools. Yet curiously enough in this plan where the dividing line was drawn so broadly between the two classes of pupils, and which was moreover given the widest circulation possible by publishing it in full in the *Intelligencer*, it was further provided that neither the committee of the board having charge of the admissions to the school of poor children, "nor the principal teacher to whom alone the circumstances shall be communicated, shall disclose a knowledge of those who are educated as poor children." The first school opened was the Western School on the 20th of January, 1806, with Richard White in charge as principal teacher. For the first year a rented house was occupied on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 17th and 18th streets, N. W.[2]

It was not until the 19th of May the Eastern Academy was opened, although Rev. Robert Elliot of Strasburg, Pa., had been elected principal in February. The north building of Carroll Row on the east side of 1st Street, between East Capitol Street

[1] Plan of the academy. Journal of the board. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 25, 1805.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 17, 1806, and June 12, 1807.

and Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E., erected the previous year, was rented and occupied.[1] In the fall of 1806 permission was obtained from the president to use as sites for the proposed schoolhouses lots belonging to the United States. In accordance with this authority the board erected a building for the use of the Western Academy on lot 27, Square 127, at the southwest corner of 17th and I streets, N. W.[2]

The site selected for the Eastern Academy was on East Capitol Street, probably between 1st and 2d streets. The schoolhouses, according to a resolution of the board of Oct. 27, 1806, were fifty feet in length and twenty feet clear in width. The Eastern Academy was apparently occupied in the spring of 1807, while the change to the new building erected for the Western Academy was not made until later in that year.[3] The Western Academy building cost $797.27 and that of the Eastern Academy $792.14.[4]

The expense of erecting the schoolhouses exhausted the entire fund subscribed by citizens and left a slight deficit. Less than half of the subscriptions were paid, so that instead of $3782 being available, the treasurer of the board reported that only $1565 had been received up to May 4, 1807. The treasurer also reported the total expenditures for salaries,

[1] *Intelligencer*, May 14, 1806.

[2] The corporation of the city of Washington finally in the year 1821 purchased the lot from the government for $100 and sold it with the building in 1832 for $309. Eighty Years of the Public Schools of Washington. J. Ormond Wilson. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 1, p. 126. Corp. law, Oct. 26, 1820, appropriating $100 for the purchase of the lot.

[3] *Intelligencer*, April 17, 1807. Announcement of the opening of a school for young ladies in "the house next to the one lately occupied by Mr. Elliot on Capitol Hill." Advertisement, June 12, 1807, of the sale of a two-story brick house on part of lot 18, Square 168 (south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 17th and 18th streets) which "adjoins the one now in occupation of Mr. White, the teacher of the Western School." It is supposed the teachers lived in the houses rented for the use of the schools, as the journal notes the approval of the board of the house taken by Mr. White.

[4] Report of committee to ascertain the state of the public schools made April 13, 1814, to the board of aldermen. Journal of that body, Vol. 5. Also report of treasurer of the trustees, May 25, 1807. Journal of school board.

furniture, supplies and other items from Sept. 25, 1805, to May 4, 1807, were $1714, while there had been received from the city treasury the sum of $2250.[1]

The school hours fixed by the board from March 20 to Sept. 20, in each year, were from 8.30 to 12.30, and from 2.30 to 5.30 and from Sept. 20 to March 20, from 9 to 12, and from 2 to 4.30. On Saturdays the schools were opened to 12 o'clock. The vacations were 4th of July, 10th to 31st of August and Dec. 24 to Jan. 4.

It is evident the expectations of the board, relative to the patronage of the schools from those able to pay tuition, were in keeping with its views as to its scope and future. For within a year the stated salary to the principal teachers was abolished and instead they were to receive the tuition from the pay scholars and $20 per year for each poor scholar, not to exceed sixty in number annually. The school fund was diminished when the city council at the beginning of the third school year cut down the appropriation from $1500 to $800 because of the apparent profusion in the expenditure of the public money, which "was loudly complained of."[2]

A few months after this action by the city council a committee of the trustees reported to that body that "the institution for the education of youth could not be supported in anything like a state of respectability, according to the plan now in operation, for the reason that no teacher possessing requisite talents and character could be induced to take the principal charge of either branch of the institution for the sum produced from the grant of the corporation and the fees of pay scholars."

[1] In this amount was included $750 for the half of the city's fiscal year from May 28, 1805, to May 28, 1806, and the entire appropriation of $1500 for the year 1806–1807. The total revenue of the city for the latter year was $9905, including $2000 borrowed from the bank to be repaid from the receipts from delinquent taxpayers, so that the school appropriation was 15 per cent of the total city expenditures. Report of joint committee of the city councils on the finances. *Intelligencer*, May 29, 1807. In 1911 public school expenditures were 28 per cent of the annual budget of the District.

[2] Report of a committee of the trustees, Aug. 3, 1812, to the city council. Journal of the board.

The remedy proposed by the committee, and, in fact, as it was explained, "the only mode of saving the institution was the merging of the two schools into one central academy." But as it turned out the plan proposed to the board and adopted for one academy took the more ambitious form of a college, for which an application for a charter was to be made to congress and subscriptions solicited for an endowment. But nothing came of the college scheme. Three years later, in the spring of 1812, a building on the south side of E Street, between 7th and 8th streets, N. W., was rented by the trustees and a school opened on the Lancaster plan, under the direction of Henry Ould, a pupil of Lancaster, the founder of the system, who had sent him from England. A brother, Robert Ould, had, the previous November, opened a Lancastrian school in Georgetown, which was incorporated the next year by congress as the trustees of the Georgetown Lancaster School Society.[1]

A school building was erected on the west side of 29th Street, between Bridge and Olive streets. The two buildings erected by the trustees of the Washington schools continued under their management, but as private schools; that is, only pay pupils admitted.[2]

The failure of the school plan, according to the report of a committee of the trustees made Jan. 20, 1809, and also repeated in a history of the first six years of the schools, sent to the city council by the trustees Aug. 3, 1812, was due to the lack of adequate funds, which was the only circumstance, the trustees asserted, that prevented the attendance of a larger number of poor pupils. The class distinction of the system, which appears so intolerable to the modern mind, does not seem to have been an obstacle in the progress of the schools; at least there is no contemporary reference to it as

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 18, 1812. Act of Congress, March 19, 1812. The incorporators were John Laird, Henry Foxall, Stephen B. Balch, Robert Beverly, Robert Munro, John M. Daniel, Jr., David Wiley, Walter D. Addison, Daniel Bussard, Francis S. Key, Walter Smith and John Abbott.

[2] Report of committee board of aldermen on the schools. Journal, Vol. 5, April 13, 1814.

even a probable cause of the failure, although the rule adopted by the board making the list of poor pupils private and confidential certainly indicates there was some apprehension on this point. However, the same system was continued in the Lancastrian school, and one of the admired features was "that no one but the teachers, not even the master himself, knows which scholars are paid for and which go free." [1] Later on a discrimination was made against the pay pupils in reducing the tuition only of the poor pupils from $20 to $14 per year.[2] On the other hand, the two schools, during the period both classes of pupils were received, seemed to rank with the private schools, judging from the notices and advertisements that appeared in the newspapers.[3]

At the same time the effect on schools conducted on such a plan of the competition of other schools was no doubt important. In a sketch of the public schools, published in the *Intelligencer*, Aug. 25, 1809, it is stated that four years ago, when the schools were established, there were in the city two or three private schools, but at that time there were at least ten. But after all it was the money question. In the seven years since 1803 the population of the city had doubled, and its revenue showed a still greater proportionate increase, so that instead of devoting fifteen per cent of the annual expenditure to schools as at first, only a little more than three per cent was allotted to such a purpose.[4] When in the fall of 1806 the trustees

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 19, 1812.

[2] The same, Jan. 12, 1810. At a later period when the attendance was exclusively confined to poor pupils, then they were given the name of charity schools.

[3] Richard White, the principal of the Washington Academy, West, "takes the opportunity of acquainting the respectable friends in the vicinity of the academy" that "he will be prepared to receive a few young ladies under his care." *Intelligencer*, Dec. 31, 1806.

Advertisement of Robert Elliot, principal of the Washington Academy, East, that he has an assistant engaged and daily expected, and that he will have more time and leisure to devote to the higher classes and the female department. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 3, 1806.

[4] A summary statement of receipts and expenditures of the corporation of Washington from June, 1810, to June, 1811. *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1811.

were considering the selection of a permanent site for the two schools, an application was made by them to the city council asking for the use of the Eastern Academy, the market-house on New Jersey Avenue.[1] As has been stated, another site was chosen for the school. The earliest reference that has been preserved to this market is to be found in the corporation law of Oct. 6, 1802, taking under public control the two existing markets — the Centre and New Jersey Avenue markets — and authorizing the establishment of an east and of a west market. Centre Market had been opened in December of the previous year, in place of the one that had been in use on the President's Square. It may be concluded the market-house on New Jersey Avenue had been in operation for some time. From the bounds given in the ordinance of 1802, of the section of the city for which the market-house was provided, it may be inferred that its location was on the section of New Jersey Avenue, south of D Street, S. E., and presumably on the public reservation, now known as Garfield Park. It was opened under municipal control on the 4th of February, 1803.[2] In less than a year authority was given by the city council to establish "a market on the Market Square at the Eastern Branch to be called the Eastern Branch Market."[3] This reservation comprised the two squares between K and L streets, extending from 5th Street, nearly to 7th, S. E., and is now unoccupied, but is still public property. Such authority was accompanied by the condition usual in such cases, that a market-house be built by individual subscription. But that was not done until the fall of 1806, when the market was finally opened.[4] There is no further mention of the market on New Jersey Avenue. In a couple of months after the passage of the ordinance of Oct. 6, 1802, the Western Market was opened, the site occupied being the triangular public ground, now used as a park on the

[1] Journal of common council, Vol. 1, Oct. 13, 1806.

[2] *Intelligencer* of that date.

[3] Ordinance of Dec. 1, 1804.

[4] Ordinance of Nov. 28, 1806, *Intelligencer*, Aug. 29, 1806. Announcement that "the new market-house near the Navy Yard" would be open Sept. 1.

north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 20th and 21st streets, N. W.[1] During the early years the Western Market had a struggling existence, and as late as 1814 but one stall had been rented the two previous years and none at all during that current year.[2]

Several years elapsed before another market was established, and then on the first day of February, 1813, the Capitol Hill Market was opened.[3] As there was no public ground apparently to be had in the desired locality "in or near East Capitol Street,"[4] the market building was erected in the centre of East Capitol Street, between 1st and 2d streets[5] following in this particular the course of congress that gave over to the use of the doorkeepers of the two houses and their families two frame structures that stood directly in the line of B Street and New Jersey Avenue, on the south side of the capitol, and which had been erected by the commissioners for the use of the workmen.[6] The cost of the market-house was met by a direct appropriation of public funds, the first expenditure of that sort. The new centre of business was not regarded with favor by those interested in the Centre and Eastern markets, as it was thought likely to draw away the patronage at those places which in the case of the Centre Market already enjoyed the distinction of being

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 6, 1802. Western Market opened, Dec. 3, 1802. Also the same, Aug. 4, 1826, describing the location. Although a site for a market for that section of the city had been provided in making the public reservations in the square bounded by 20th and 21st streets and B and the Potomac River it was not used and was never occupied. To-day it is a part of the Potomac Park. At that time it was in part at least covered by the waters of the Potomac. See advertisement in *Intelligencer*, Sept. 2, 1805, describing the brewery on the square to the north as being on navigable water.

[2] Journal board of aldermen, Vol. 5. Message of the mayor, Feb. 12, 1814.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 28, 1813. In the issue of Nov. 13 appears for the first time the designation Marsh Market current for so many years of Centre Market.

[4] Corporation law, Dec. 21, 1812.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 20, 1826.

[6] These houses were described by Latrobe in a report made in 1808 as in a decayed condition and unfit for further use. American State Papers, Vol. 1, Miscellaneous, p. 720.

the best in the city.[1] About this time an agitation, claimed to be in the interests of the new market, was started to do away with the Sunday market at Centre Market, authorized by the ordinance of 1802.[2] The advocates of the change charged that the Sunday markets were the occasion of disorder, and it is presumed that as one reason assigned for a Sunday market was that it afforded the only opportunity for slaves in the adjoining states to bring the product of their industry to the market,[3] that class of the population was beginning to prove troublesome in this particular as it was in other phases of community life of the day. In 1810 the slave population of the city itself was sixteen per cent of the entire population, but at the end of ten years the percentage had declined to fourteen and a half.[4] As early as 1808 the city fathers endeavored to discourage the sending of slaves from the adjoining states into the District as it was found the competition of such labor tended to lessen the number of white laborers by depriving them of work. The male slaves of non-residents over eighteen years of age when brought into the city and hired were taxed by the city authorities $15 per annum, while the tax on the same class belonging to residents was only $1.50 per year. As indicating the state of the demand for domestic help a tax of $1 per annum was imposed alike on female slaves belonging to resident and non-resident owners.[5] There were also objections to Sunday markets from those who looked upon them as violations of a proper observance of the day.[6] A compromise was proposed in the message of the mayor of the city, James H. Blake, to the city council,[7] who recommended the doing away with Sunday markets from October 1st to April 1st. As he explains, the season is sufficiently cold to

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 17, 1813.
[2] The same, Nov. 23, 1813.
[3] The same, Dec. 10, 1812, and Nov. 23, 1813.
[4] In the same period the free colored population increased from 10 to 12 per cent.
[5] City Ordinances of May 25, 1808, and Nov. 10, 1809.
[6] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 10, 1812.
[7] Journal Bd. of Alder., Vol. 5, Oct. 10, 1815.

market on Saturday for Sunday and Monday, so that in the lack of ice and means for keeping perishable articles may be found the principal reasons for markets on the first day of the week. Such a change had been made, the mayor states, in Georgetown and Alexandria.[1] He also adds that in this way a means will be provided for excluding from the city many disorderly characters who make marketing an excuse for coming to the city. "I trust," he concludes with a mixture of pious and commercial motives, "we shall not be wanting in piety and devotion sufficient at any rate to enforce a strict observance of the day, more especially when we cannot be put to any inconvenience by it."

A bill to accomplish this purpose was passed by the common council, but was rejected by the board of aldermen. Four years later a law was made which prohibited Sunday markets without regard to the seasons of the year.[2] However, the opponents of the measure, when they found themselves in the minority, resolved to go beyond the jurisdiction of the city council, where they could enjoy the freedom of going to market on Sunday. A market was established at the south end of the Navy Yard bridge, but as there is no record of a further reference to it the conclusion may be reached that it was not continued long.[3]

The argument made use of in the movement to do away with Sunday markets that they were a violation of the day was in accordance with a sentiment of the time that found expression strongly in the city ordinances of Georgetown and then to a less degree in those of Alexandria and still less in those of Washington. As early as the year 1796 the Georgetown fathers decreed that shops should be closed on Sunday and there should be no buying or selling of goods dealt in by shop keep-

[1] In Georgetown the Sunday market was only for the sale of butchers' meat, but was abolished by an ordinance passed by the council a few weeks before similar action was taken by the Washington corporation. Ordinance of Corporation of Georgetown, p. 110, 1821.

[2] Ordinance, Aug. 2, 1819. Authority was given to open all the market-houses Saturday evening.

[3] *City of Washington Gazette*, Oct. 4, 1819.

ers and hucksters. A further advance in Sunday restrictions was made by the law of April 2, 1814, when working on Sunday was forbidden or allowing children or slaves to work, "or otherwise profane the Sabbath by going hunting, fishing or other unlawful pastimes."

In Alexandria the Sunday legislation in the early days was confined to the ordinance of June 2, 1806, which made a finable offence to play bandy and other games on Sunday with disorder or noise or indulging in noisy or disorderly conduct "to the great inconvenience of the citizens." [1] In the same year the Washington city council did away with Sunday markets, it also prohibited the sale of liquor on Sunday, and three years later forbade the discharge of firearms or hunting within the city limits on that day. Those three provisions of Sunday legislation marked the beginning of laws of that description, and also the end, at least for a number of years.

[1] Laws of corporation of Alex., p. 156 Alex., 1811.

# CHAPTER XIX

## EARLY EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE BUSINESS OF THE CITY

To make Washington a centre for the trade and business of the surrounding country, as well as to make it readily accessible, was the purpose of much of the effort and money expended by residents in the early years. To accomplish this, bridges were erected over the Potomac and the Eastern Branch, where none had ever been, and new roads were opened. Adequate means of communication with the proposed new centre was one of the important topics in L'Enfant's preliminary study of the proper treatment of the site which he submitted to President Washington a few weeks after he came to the locality.[1] When he included the entire site selected in his plan, he proposed the erection of a bridge over the Eastern Branch and one over the Potomac, with Pennsylvania Avenue as a connection through the city, and also a bridge at the terminus of East Capitol Street.[2] He also provided in his scheme for the post road to pass through the city. In addition he laid down the route of a canal, connecting the Potomac and Eastern Branch. With the exception of the post road, all these enterprises were carried out by citizens. As early as 1797 a bridge was built across the Potomac just below the Little Falls, but after a service of seven years, from natural decay, the wooden roofed-in structure fell from its high abutments of stone.[3] A new bridge similar in design and material was erected, but in six months it disappeared as the result of a freshet, although it

[1] Note relative to the ground lying on the Eastern Branch. War Department Manuscripts, Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 2, p. 26.

[2] These structures are shown on L'Enfant's map, the Potomac bridge being at the Little Falls. On the Philadelphia engraved map the Potomac bridge is placed opposite Georgetown.

[3] *Intelligencer*, April 27, 1804 and March 16, 1808.

was thirty-seven feet above the ordinary level of the river.[1] Four years passed before the loss was repaired, and then a new bridge was built, supported entirely by iron chains.[2] But in a little more than two years the new structure, swung across the water, was unable to withstand the pressure of the logs brought down in masses by a great freshet, and was carried away.[3] More than a year passed before the damage was repaired, and a new bridge, supported by chains, spanned the river. Before, however, the company could raise the needed funds, it was necessary to secure from congress an act authorizing an assessment of the stock.[4] In the year 1804, when the Potomac bridge, or as it came to be called, the chain bridge, was swept away, the purpose of the Maryland charter of 1795 was accomplished when the Eastern Branch at the foot of Kentucky Avenue was spanned with a structure which came to be known as the Lower Bridge.[5] In the following year another Maryland bridge charter, granted in 1797, was utilized and a structure was erected by the Anacostia Co., a short distance north of the foot of East Capitol Street, which was spoken of as the upper bridge.[6] It may be concluded this bridge was built mainly at the expense of Benjamin Stoddert, who with Thomas Law and John Templeman were named in the charter to receive subscriptions to the stock, for some years later Dr. Thomas Ewell, his son-in-law and administrator of the estate, offered for sale 196 shares of the company's stock, which was within four shares of the entire authorized capital of $20,000.[7]

[1] *Intelligencer*, April 27, 1804.

[2] The same, March 16, 1808.

[3] The same, Nov. 24, 1810.

[4] United States Law, Feb. 22, 1811. Also memorial of the bridge company giving history of the structure, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen., No. 86, May 1, 1826.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 11, 1804. Bridge opened Jan. 12.

[6] City Ordinance, Nov. 29, 1805, "the upper bridge now erecting over the Anacosta [sic] Creek."

[7] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 24 and Dec. 26, 1822. As Mr. Stoddert owned a tract of land known as Long Meadows adjoining the city bounds where the bridge spanned the Branch, as well as property at Bladensburg, it is apparent that it was designed to develop his holdings. The bridge eventually passed into the possession of William Bennings.

As early as the fall of 1801 a more direct communication with Alexandria and the southern country than the existing post road, via the Georgetown ferry, was recognized as important, and at that time a movement was begun to erect a bridge over the Potomac at the foot of Maryland Avenue. It was not until nearly seven years had passed that congress gave the necessary authority for forming a company.

At the time the city was laid out, even Rock Creek was without such facilities, for the first structure of the sort erected a number of years previous on the line of M Street had fallen down. Early in their administration the city commissioners built a bridge on the line of K Street and in the fall of 1800 another structure was erected at the foot of M Street by the joint contribution of the city commissioners, the corporation of Georgetown and citizens. By means of the bridges the city streets were connected with the outlying territory, while to span such important watercourses as the Tiber and its tributaries and James Creek, that divided the area of the city into sections, minor structures were erected by the commissioners over the Tiber at Pennsylvania Avenue and 2d Street, at 7th Street, just south of Pennsylvania Avenue, and also over a tributary of James Creek at New Jersey Avenue, and E Street, S. E., and on south N Street over James Creek.

An effort was made to continue the work started by the city commissioners to build what became the Washington City canal. Authority was given by the Maryland legislature in 1795 to certain citizens to hold a lottery and devote the proceeds to the construction of the canal under the direction of the city commissioners, but while the lottery was drawn, the receipts were evidently not sufficient to even make a start, as nothing was done. Then in 1802 a canal company was chartered by congress. As the first grant of privilege made by congress in the District to what is now known as a public utility corporation, this measure is of interest as it expresses modern ideas as to the mutual obligations and rights of the public and of a corporation of that character.

It was stipulated in exchange for the free donation of a right

of way through the city that when the receipts for wharfage produced the annual interest of eight per cent on the sums expended, exclusive of the tolls, then the tolls shall cease and the canal be entirely free for passage. But having still in mind the public interests, the charter further required that when the wharfage shall exceed the annual interest of twelve per cent, then one-half of the surplus shall be appropriated to such public uses as congress may direct or be used to pay off the principal. The charter was to continue fifty years, "or as much longer as the principal sums expended shall remain unpaid." It was further provided that always all public property shall pass free of wharfage and toll. In case within five years the canal was not completed so as to admit boats drawing three feet of water to pass through the entire extent of two and one-half miles, the waterway should revert to the United States.[1] But so little did the enterprise appeal to the public, although the projectors used every effort to enlist the coöperation of capital and even made an attempt to raise money in England,[2] a company was not even formed.[3] Seven years later, the charter having expired two years previously by limitation, congress granted a new charter, which exacted less in return for the privileges granted than its predecessor.[4]

It was, however, stipulated that any excess in net profits in one year over fifteen per cent upon the sum actually expended by the company in opening and completing the canal should be paid to the city of Washington. Public property was as before to be exempt from the payment of tolls, and if the canal was not completed in seven years, it should revert to the United States. In addition, the company was required to make annual reports to congress, as is now done by all District public utility corporations.

Why the second attempt in 1802 to build the canal failed,

[1] United States Stats., Vol. 2, p. 175.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 5, 1803. A letter from Thomas Law dated May 20 in England stated that he was engaged in raising money in that country for the canal.

[3] The same, Sept. 6, 1817.

[4] United States Law, Feb. 16, 1809.

can only be gathered from isolated statements found in contemporary records. According to one of these, "the Potomac Company was at a stop for want of resources and the city had few inhabitants in the Eastern Branch, and a general despondency prevailed from disappointments, failures, and impoverishment which it is now painful to look back upon."[1] It is quite evident the enterprise did not have behind it a united community.[2]

This was due in part to sectional jealousies; the interests of Georgetown and the western end of the city being opposed to those of the eastern section. It was the latter locality as the terminus of the proposed waterway that was to become a shipping port and a commercial centre, and hence, it was narrowly concluded, would derive all the benefits of the proposed work.[3]

The rivalry between the different parts of the city had existed from the beginning and owed its long continuance and vigor to the peculiarity, unknown in towns of that day, of two principal centres, caused by placing the capitol and the department buildings at a distance from each other, instead of making one centre and grouping the sparse population about it, so that the growth of the city could follow the natural course of an expansion outward. Then again one of the purposes in building the canal was to bring articles intended for the use of the citizens from the river through the city, thus reducing the cost of long and expensive hauls. As a community interest such a consideration no doubt had a wide appeal. Even Georgetown had no reason for jealousy. But what was said of the Eastern Branch

[1] *Intelligencer*, May 18, 1807. "It is, I believe," comments Latrobe in the report made in 1804 to the canal commissioners, "impossible to meet with a single individual who is in perfect good humor, when talking of the city." *Intelligencer*, May 26, 1809.

[2] More than two years elapsed before the public was invited to subscribe to the stock. Notice of the opening of the subscription books. *Intelligencer*, June 15, 1804.

[3] No doubt such a conception was confirmed by the fact that Thomas Tingey, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Thomas Law and Daniel C. Brent, who were named in the law to receive subscriptions to the stock, were property holders and residents of the eastern section.

and its future was quite another matter. It was all very well to point out that large vessels could not load at Georgetown owing to the shallowness of the channel and also that the river in that locality was closed with ice for a portion of the year while the Eastern Branch was more open, and also that the ascent of the river beyond Greenleaf Point required two tides, an important consideration in sail navigation.[1] A line of argument of this sort was not very palatable to the citizens of Georgetown, who were spending their money in an attempt which they hoped would result in removing the obstructions caused by the mud deposits in their channel below Analostan Island, and who later on secured authority from congress to levy a special tax on the real estate within[2] the corporate limits to defray the cost of building a causeway from Analostan Island to the Virginia shore.[2]

As the use of a dredge or what was called a mud machine had not been effective in removing the bar, it was concluded that if the entire volume of water at that time divided into two parts by Analostan Island could be made to sweep through the eastern channel, then the obstruction would be carried away. The causeway was built under the direction of Thomas Moore, a Quaker of Brookville, Maryland, and while the main course of the river was again changed to the east side of the island and the channel between the island and Georgetown was deepened, the bar below remained and increased in size.[3] But if the causeway was disappointing to the Georgetown people in

[1] Observations on the intended canal. Thomas Law.

[2] United States Law, Jan. 19, 1805. The sum of $24,000 was realized, and a causeway was built wide enough to become a part of the post road to Alexandria which passed over a portion of the north end of the island. In consideration of the right of way granted by General Mason, the owner of the island, he was given the exclusive right to operate a ferry from the corporate limits of Georgetown. United States *vs.* Morris Testimony, p. 526, petition of the Corporation of Georgetown to Congress, Jan. 4, 1811. Also terms of the agreement with General Mason. Sen. Doc., No. 86, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., May 1, 1826.

[3] Journal. Washington Common Council. Vol. 2, July 26, 1810. Report of committee. Also United States *vs.* Morris Testimony, p. 495.

its failure to keep the channel of the river clear of deposits, it was found to be an actual injury to the trade of Alexandria. For instead of the sailing vessels descending the river to Alexandria being able to use the safe channel protected by the high shores, they were obliged to run the risks of the open river.[1] An appeal was made to congress, and the city council of Alexandria was given authority by that body to levy a tax for the purpose of building a canal from the river around the causeway to Alexandria,[2] but owing to the disturbed conditions growing out of the war, the work was not done. In addition to the Washington canal increasing facilities of local communication, it was also expected that the goods brought down the Potomac, when the Potomac Canal was finished, would pass through the city canal to the Eastern Branch. But the people of Georgetown had no more notion of becoming a way station on a water route than they had of losing their position on the great highway between the north and south which they foresaw would be the outcome of the building of the bridge over the Potomac at the foot of Maryland Avenue.

The Georgetown point of view was no doubt voiced by Benjamin Stoddert,[3] who declared that within five years after Europe was at peace Georgetown as a centre of trade would equal Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York or Boston. But the peace of Europe was delayed beyond that period. The difficulties of the navigation of the Potomac north of Alexandria could hardly with reason be attributed to the baleful effects of the ambition of Napoleon, if the picture of the Georgetown river trade as given in the course of the bridge debate was not overdrawn.[4] For then it was said no square-rigged vessel would risk an approach to Georgetown for the purpose of being fully loaded there. Last year, it was asserted, a few went up empty, took in a part of their cargoes and dropped

[1] Annals of Congress, 23d Cong., 1st Sess., p. 966, Jan. 8, 1835.

[2] United States Law, June 17, 1812.

[3] Stoddert to John Templeman. About 1804. Manuscript Division Library of Congress.

[4] Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 803 *et seq.*, Nov. 4, 1807.

down to Alexandria, where the loading was completed. Even tobacco, inspected at Georgetown, was taken in drays to the Eastern Branch to be shipped. During the past eight years, one speaker said, the number of vessels going to Georgetown averaged only about twenty-three per year.[1]

A few months later, a bill to make the Eastern Branch a port of entry was reported unfavorably in the house on the ground that the fees at the custom house in Georgetown were not sufficient to compensate the collector, and he was paid $200 in addition from the public treasury. It was also the confident expectation of the advocates of the city canal that the menace to the health of the city as well as the unsightliness of the principal approach to the capitol, due to the swamp that bordered the sluggish current of the Tiber south of Pennsylvania Avenue from 12th Street practically to the foot of Capitol Hill would be removed.[2] The prospect of this improvement seemed the more favorable as the determined line of the canal left the course of the Tiber in the vicinity of 6th Street and followed the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue to 3d Street. It was supposed the water from the Tiber and the bordering morass would be drained off into the new waterway.[3] But as the years went on, the enterprise of the Potomac Company, still incomplete, came to a standstill for want of money. As offering the only prospect of bringing to the city the great volume of trade with the western country, the halting and uncertain prosecution of what came to be recognized as an impractical scheme for the improvement of the Potomac no doubt was a serious check in the trade development of the city. At the same time an early evidence that the city might prosper even if it did not become a commercial centre was to be found in the growth of

[1] The author of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of Jan. 16, 1804, in replying to a protest against congress granting the petition for a bridge just presented stated that only about half a dozen sea vessels (or vessels of the larger type) enter the port of Georgetown annually.

[2] *Intelligencer*, May 18, 1807. There was also a swamp between New Jersey Avenue and the proposed canal formed by the tributaries of James Creek.

[3] The same, Sept. 6, 1817.

the population. For in the first ten years the city more than doubled in size. It led the three towns, even forging ahead of Alexandria, which in 1800 had nearly twice as many people, while Georgetown, at that period, about equalled Washington, but ten years later had forty per cent less than the capital city. Washington's growth in the first seven years of that decade was surpassed by that of the last three years, as sixty per cent of the decennial increase was gained in the latter period. But while the circumstances of the community improved from year to year, due to the growth in population, yet a large part of the capital available for investment was absorbed in subscriptions to the stock of various companies organized to erect bridges and build turnpikes, objects recognized as of vital importance. This condition, as well as a lack of public confidence in the practical character of the canal scheme and in the results of such an improvement, affected the prospects of the company chartered in 1809. However, the projectors acted with promptness. Two months after the law passed, notice was given of the opening of books for subscription to the stock. But the subscriptions came in slowly, and two years passed before the last instalment was paid.[1] Even then only one-half of the authorized capital of $100,000 was subscribed.[2]

The actual work of digging the canal was begun a little more than a year after the charter was granted. It was made a public event, and nothing was lacking in the character of the exercises to enhance the importance of the undertaking. A marquee was erected near the junction of New Jersey Avenue and E Street, S. E., where the company's office was established. Here on a May afternoon came Mr. Madison, the President of the United States, and the principal officers of the federal and city governments. The engineer of the work, B. H. Latrobe, who had served in that capacity with the promoters of the first canal company, had marked out the lines of the proposed water-

[1] *Intelligencer*, July 30, 1811.

[2] The same, Sept. 6, 1817. History of the project in a communication signed "Stockholder."

way and the president of the company, Elias B. Caldwell, the clerk of the United States Supreme Court, handed a spade to President Madison, who turned the first sod. Then the company went to the tent, where toasts were drunk. Before the invited guests and spectators left the spot the actual work was begun, as the contractor started turning up the ground with a plough drawn by six horses.[1] For a year gangs of Irishmen toiled in the trenches,[2] and then the money paid by the stockholders was spent, the resources of the company were exhausted. The following spring congress came to the rescue, not by a direct appropriation, but by reviving the Maryland law of 1795, passed for the benefit of the canal, which gave authority to hold a lottery. But the national legislature was not willing to grant such a privilege, which was valued more highly by that body than by the investing public, without exacting some return, which the Maryland law failed to do, and so the condition was imposed that the proceeds of the lottery, after the expenses were paid, were to be used in completing the canal and draining the marshes and low grounds contiguous to the canal.[3] But that was not all, for the right was reserved to congress to create additional shares of canal stock for the sole benefit of the corporation of Washington, the new capital stock to bear the same proportion to the existing issue as the amount derived by the company from the lottery bore to the expenditures made or

[1] *Intelligencer*, May 10, 1810, nearly eighteen years since a beginning was made to build the canal.

[2] Chorographical Description of the District. D. B. Warden, Paris, 1816, p. 27. Warden states that at that time (1811) the laboring class of the city was mainly composed of Irish. But they were not all recent comers. As early as the year 1802 "the sons of Hibernia," wearing shamrock in their hats on the 17th of March, were sufficiently numerous in the city to be noticed in letters written to his wife by Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell, a member of the House from New York. *Harpers Monthly*, April, 1879, p. 745.

It is Warden who noted the following sign on one of the shops in the city, "Peter Rodgers, saddler from the green fields of Erin and tyranny to the green streets of Washington and liberty."

[3] United States law, May 6, 1812. A similar policy marked the conditions imposed on the turnpike companies both in the Congressional and Maryland charters.

thereafter made in building the canal.[1] The work was resumed, but was interrupted during the season of 1814 by the invasion of the city and the consequent loss and disturbing influence on business, so that it was not until the fall of 1815 that the canal was pronounced practicable for loaded boats to pass through.[2] The unfriendly and indifferent attitude of the public mind towards this undertaking, and especially at the period in the history of the country when canal and road building was enlisting the money and interest of the people all through the eastern section of the United States, was directly in contrast with the course of such an enterprise as building a bridge across the Potomac. At the very outset the project brought together the two communities of Alexandria and Washington, except citizens in the western section of the latter interested in the river front adjoining Georgetown who regarded their interests as joined with Georgetown and who in 1801 contributed to the expense of clearing the channel below Mason's Island. While the bridge bill was making its slow way through congress and the citizens of Georgetown both in their corporate capacity and as individuals were protesting and petitioning, the citizens of Washington were providing a ferry service from the end of Maryland Avenue to Alexander's Island.[3]

To the latter, called, later on, Bridgepoint, the citizens of Alexandria were opening a road from their town.[4]

[1] The writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of March 14, 1812, regards these restrictions as salutary, and in an account of the canal in the issue of Oct. 27, 1815, it is stated these provisions were inserted at the desire of the company.

[2] The eastern terminus was at the foot of New Jersey Avenue, the most easterly of the two proposed branches or forks of the canal. Owing to the proximity to the navy-yard, and the wharfs on the Eastern Branch, it was no doubt regarded as more important than the other branch, which was to leave the main stem at South Capitol and G streets and to follow the course of James Creek as it flowed southwest and on the east side of Greenleaf's Point to the Eastern Branch.

[3] The common council granted an application of William M. Duncanson, one of the early large investors in city lots to keep a ferry at this location. Journal, Vol. 1, April 23, 1806.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 3, 1806. Two years later a company chartered by congress took over this road, on which very little was done, and completed it, including a bridge over Four Mile Run.

In addition the city council of Washington lent its aid by erecting a pier at Maryland Avenue. It was at this period the house of representatives for the first time passed the bridge bill, but it failed in the senate.[1] On the other hand, the Georgetown corporation to provide campaign material paid a stenographer $10 per day to report the senate debate on the bridge bill, and ordered 500 copies to be printed, including the documents relating to the controversy.[2] At the next session the long controversy was closed by the enactment of the law of Feb. 5, 1808, but that did not quiet the contention of the people of Georgetown that the navigation of the river and hence the commerce of the town would be injured by the wooden bridge resting on piles with draws over the two channels that led across the Potomac. The committee of the house in a favorable report on the bridge bill[3] expressed the opinion that a bridge with a draw "will permit the passage of vessels without much detention," referring to the delay in the process of getting sailing vessels up to the entrance of such an opening. In effect, however, the committee asserted the superiority of the rights of the majority of citizens, for it was pointed out the benefit to the general public justified the improvement. For, as was claimed, the intended bridge would lessen by nearly six miles (actually less than four miles) the distance between the capital city and Alexandria as compared with the existing route via Georgetown and the ferry. Besides, the further consideration was emphasized throughout the discussion of the danger as well as the delay in crossing such a body of water as the Potomac in the open boats of the period. When on account of ice, freshets or storms the passage was impossible, the only recourse for the travelling public was the bridge at the Little Falls some two miles up the river. The advantages of the shorter, surer route, it was maintained, were to be enjoyed not merely by the inhabitants of the two towns but by the people of the north

[1] Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 2d Sess., December, 1806, January, 1807.

[2] Georgetown Resolves, Jan. 6 and Feb. 17, 1807.

[3] American State Papers. Miscellaneous, Vol. 1, p. 437. Jan. 21, 1806.

and south, as the great highway between the two sections would be shortened. As has already been shown, Georgetown, some years prior to this date, had practically lost the navigation of the Potomac through natural causes. In addition to the flats or accumulated deposits where the river broadened out opposite the site of the city, a similar obstruction in the Virginia channel below the south end of Mason's or Analostan Island had prevented for many years the free approach of sea-going vessels to the Georgetown harbor, although there was sufficient depth for coasting vessels or those engaged in the home trade. The form and extent of the flats are graphically shown on the engraved map of 1792. On the west side of the mass of river deposits ran the Virginia channel, and on the east the city channel, while midway was the middle or squash channel. The separation of the waters into these three channels took place a short distance south of Peter's, later Easby's, Point, below the end of D Street, N. W. The formation of the flats bordered on each side by the two channels continued south a short distance beyond Greenleaf's Point. But the middle channel ended its course just below the bridge site by joining the city channel.[1]

One of the theories advanced at the time was that the middle channel was created after the great freshet of 1784.[2]

Some five years after the completion of the causeway between Analostan Island and the mainland it was found the increased volume of water diverted on the east side of the island had not swept away the channel obstruction at the south end. The Georgetown authorities decided upon making another effort. A year had passed since the completion of the bridge, and while there is no record showing what had been the effect of that structure upon the volume of the commerce of the town, yet

[1] The first recorded soundings of the river are found on the engraved map, while the second are given on the map of 1797. The condition of the three channels south of Analostan Island is shown by the figures giving the depths in feet of the shallowest parts as follows:—

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Washington Channel | 1792 | 7 | 1797 | 5 |
| Middle Channel | 1792 | 9 | 1797 | 7 |
| Virginia Channel | 1792 | 16 | 1797 | 14 |

[2] United States *vs.* Morris Testimony, p. 494.

the tide of land travel had fallen off. The receipts from the ferry had decreased one-half. For since the bridge had been built the mail stages and other travel of the post road or principal highway no longer passed through Georgetown and then to the foot of Wisconsin Avenue and to the flat-bottomed boats propelled by oars at both ends that made the trip to Analostan Island.[1]

The builder of the causeway, Thomas Moore, proposed another plan to the Georgetown authorities at this time. It was approved by the corporation of Georgetown, and an appropriation of $10,000 was made to defray the cost. During the summer of 1810 work was begun on the erection of wing dams on the flats a short distance below Analostan Island and stretching in an oblique direction to the south. The water coming down the river instead of spreading over the flats between the middle and the Virginia channels was to be directed into the former, and gradually scour out the mud and make a deep waterway all the way down below Greenleaf's Point. In time it was expected the dams could be extended across the Virginia channel and all the river trade would be confined to the middle and city courses. The former was to be a highway of sufficient depth to allow vessels of the greatest draught of the day to come to Georgetown.[2] However, before an actual start was made the Georgetown authorities evidently considered whether even a town corporation had jurisdiction over such a public highway as the Potomac River to enable it to do what was contemplated. It was recalled that authority was obtained from congress to erect the causeway and also to build the two bridges. At the same time it was maintained that what was proposed was not to interfere with or injure the navigation but only to remove an obstruction, thus resulting in an improvement of the river. As the corporation of the city of Washington was authorized by congress to make any improvement in the navigation of the Potomac, that body was consulted and

[1] Warden, p. 134.

[2] United States *vs.* Morris. Testimony, p. 494. Report of Thomas Moore to the corporation of Georgetown.

its approbation received.[1] This action was based on a report of a committee of the council which made an examination of the river. The council was informed that a depth of from twenty-two to thirty feet at full tide was found in the Eastern Branch as far up as the navy yard, with seventeen and one-half feet of water over the mud bar at its mouth. In the city channel there were seventeen feet, shoaling to fourteen feet at the Washington bridge. Above, the water fell to nine feet to the foot of 17th Street, and from thence to the Georgetown channel near Davidson's wharf at the foot of D Street the depth was never less than five and one-half feet. Attention was called by the committee to the injury done by the washing from the shore, especially, it was pointed out, along a street that "has lately been opened through the bluff" to Barry's old wharf at the foot of New Jersey Avenue. Dredging was the remedy proposed, but nothing was done. The work on the wing dam was begun by the Georgetown authorities with vigor, and considerable progress had been made in assembling the necessary materials when injunction proceedings were begun in the District circuit court by the Washington Bridge Co. and others.[2] The injunction was granted, and the wing dams, the most ambitious plan proposed for river improvement up to that time, and for many years later, were not built. While the Georgetown citizens had lost in the contest which they carried on with so much spirit for the preservation of the commerce of the town, yet they did not abandon all effort. They continued to do what they could. In the course of five years the mud machine was again at work clearing away the bar in the Virginia channel.[3]

The promptness with which the bridge charter granted by congress was made use of is a further indication of the intense

[1] Journal Washington Common Council. Vol. 2, July 26, 1810. Report of a committee on the Georgetown plan. Communication of Thomas Moore describing his plan. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 3, 1810.

[2] The bill in full and the replies and other papers in the case. United States *vs.* Morris. Testimony, pp. 454–528.

[3] *Intelligencer*, June 16, 1815 and Nov. 27, 1816. In the issue of Nov. 17, 1817, the statement was made that the channel had been deepened from 7 to 14 feet.

public interest in the undertaking. The ink of the signature of the president to the measure had not been dry ten days before a meeting was called by the commissioners named to receive subscriptions to the stock, and two days later the announcement was made that books would be opened April 1st.[1] In four days all the stock had been subscribed, thus placing at the command of the directors a possible fund of $200,000.[2] The payments were made in instalments, and only one-half of the capital was called for and expended.[3] Still the total was greater than the cost of the canal.

At the end of a little more than a year after the charter was secured, and in eleven months after the actual work was begun, the bridge was opened for public use, although not entirely finished.[4]

A few days previously the service which had been so anxiously expected was inaugurated when President Madison, in his carriage, passed over the bridge on his way to Alexandria, where he was entertained at dinner by the citizens of that town.[5] It may be presumed a good portion of the stock was taken by citizens of Alexandria, for half of those named in the bill to receive stock subscriptions were Alexandrians. When the five directors were elected, three of them were residents of Washington and two of Alexandria. In the course of a couple of months after the bridge bill became a law, the Washington city authorities made an appropriation to open Maryland Avenue "at least thirty feet wide along its centre from 1st Street west to the Potomac River." [6]

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 17 and 19, 1808.

[2] Manuscript minute book of the company. Property of Frederick May. The directors elected were Daniel Carroll of Duddington, who was chosen president, George Blagden, Frederick May, Robert Young and William Harper.

[3] *Intelligencer*, May 24, 1809. Description of the bridge.

[4] The same, May 22, 1809.

[5] The same, May 12, 1809.

[6] City Ordinance, May 25, 1808. As the canal was shortly afterwards opened across this thoroughfare at 3d Street, and as there is no mention of a bridge, it seems probable the avenue was not in use east of that street.

From the very outset the company made money, so that at the end of the first six months a three and a half per cent dividend was paid, and with the lapse of another half yearly period, the dividend was increased to four per cent.[1] Unlike the canal charter granted the following year, no provision was made for the public sharing in the profits of the business. However, the life of the company was limited to sixty years, when the bridge was to become the property of the United States. No charge was to be collected on public property passing over the bridge or from the troops of the United States or those of any state or of the District of Columbia.

But while the canal and the bridges spanning wide streams that separated the city on the east and the west and the south from the surrounding country were being promoted by private enterprise, the city fathers early began the use of city funds in securing the same object within the city, adequate means of communication. A large proportion of the limited resources of the municipality — the biggest item in the annual city budget — was in the early years of necessity used in opening streets within the city itself, for, with the exception of Pennsylvania Avenue from the capitol to Georgetown, F Street from 7th to 15th streets and the eastern section of Maryland Avenue where the post road entered the city, their predecessors the city commissioners had spent but little money on the avenues and streets which had been laid out on paper with such unprecedented lavishness. As these streets, with the open places formed by the intersection of the streets and the avenues, and the reservations belonged to the United States, there was no power outside of congress that could alter a line in the accepted plan.[2] In addition to this unusual feature of city government, the population had settled in various sections of the wide area, really a group of villages which must be connected, and this alone added enormously to the annual street budget. The lack of compactness

[1] *Intelligencer*, May 25, 1810. Dividend notice signed by S. Eliot, Jr., treasurer of the Washington Bridge Co.

[2] As early as April 5, 1806, John Breckinridge, attorney-general, in an opinion prepared for the president, held that there "rests nowhere a power to alter" the engraved plan of 1792, not even in congress itself.

in the location of the buildings, the great expanse of the streets — few less than eighty feet in width — and the extent of the public reservations, more especially the mall in the most populous and conspicuous part of the city, made it difficult for the ordinary observer, accustomed to exactly the reverse conditions in the cities of the day, to do justice either to the city in making or to its prospects.[1]

As will be recalled in the sketch of the discussions when the removal question was before congress, the hopelessness of it all was pointed out, based on the appearance of houses scattered and then in groups over an area exceeding that of any city in the country.[2] In fact, for many years no attempt was made to improve the entire width of such of the streets needed in the daily life of the people, and no others were touched. As has been seen, the act authorizing the opening of Maryland Avenue stipulated that only thirty feet in the width of that thoroughfare, which stretched a distance of 160 feet from building line to building line, should be improved. The same method was followed in opening up Pennsylvania Avenue, even when the work was done by the government, and many years elapsed before the 160 feet in width of its surface, less the space for sidewalks, were even macadamized. For the most part all that was attempted in the first quarter of a century in street making was to cover only a portion of the roadway with gravel. But even then

[1] John Melish, an Englishman, who viewed the city from Capitol Hill on an October day in 1806, states the buildings were numerous but scattered over a large space, suggesting more the appearance of a thickly settled country than a city. There were very few buildings east of the capitol, so that, as he found, he "had travelled a good way into the city before I saw it." Travels through the United States. Belfast, 1818.

[2] In the course of a communication printed in the *Intelligencer*, June 22, 1813, the writer states: "Of the plan of the city of Washington, the principal feature is magnificence. Its faults arise from the attention to the magnificence of the design throughout to which in some respects convenience has been sacrificed. . . . At present the inhabitants of the city feel the effects of the plan, while we enjoy little from those very admirable arrangements which do honor to the genius of Major L'Enfant, in which his design abounds and which will be evident to all when the plan is filled out. Posterity will bestow on him that praise, a regret that he has not received those rewards which he amply merits."

the area improved was equal to and in many instances greater than that undertaken in other cities of that period. For the first seven years of the city government, however, even a gravel surface was beyond the means available, and the public work was confined to opening and repairing streets.[1] The sidewalks, when any were provided, which was not always done, were gravelled, and in the case of the first laid, which was on Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol and the president's house, the chips from the stone-cutter's chisel made in shaping the stones for those structures were used by direction of the city commissioners. No brick sidewalks were put down by the city government until the year 1814, and then a special tax was laid.[2]

The first council was sanguine enough to make an appropriation of $100 for the placing of lamps "on the most public avenues and streets," but there is no record that the law was executed unless the lamps were maintained at private cost, as no item for lighting appeared in the annual city budget again for a good many years.[3]

While the municipal government, as the representative of individual property holders, was spending its slender resources in providing means of communication within the urban bounds,

[1] A description of a typical street improvement of the period is found in an advertisement of proposals in the *Intelligencer* of Oct. 29, 1804, which specified "for ploughing up, levelling and grading" north G from 17th to 19th and 18th west from New York Avenue to Pennsylvania Avenue. Six years later (*Intelligencer*, Aug. 27, 1810), 7th Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to the northern boundary was to be "rounded and gravelled," 50 feet wide.

[2] At that time the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue and the south side of C Street, both between 6th and 7th streets, N. W., were thus improved by means of a special tax of $2.50 per front foot on the abutting lots. As early as the year 1802 the roadways of a portion of M Street and of Wisconsin Avenue in Georgetown were paved with cobblestones and curbing set. The expense was met by a front foot tax of $2. Georgetown Ordinance, May 17, 1802.

[3] The earliest provision of the sort made by the Georgetown corporation was in the year 1810, when an ordinance was passed authorizing the placing of lamps when the owners of property on any paved street shall request it and on the payment of a front foot tax of 5 cents, the cost of lighting to be met by an annual tax on each householder on such street of thirty cents for each story of the house.

the general government, owning large tracts of land within the same area, shared in the benefits for the first twenty years without recognition of any incongruity or injustice.[1] In addition the city lots owned by the public were regarded by congress as a source of revenue to meet expenditures made by the general government on account of the public buildings. But after the experience in 1802, when the market was tested, the congressional dependence on such a source was limited. At that time the superintendent of the city was directed to sell enough of the lots "without an unwarrantable sacrifice" to pay the Maryland loan of $200,000, for which they were pledged. But he was unable to do so.

As directed by the same law, the superintendent did offer at public sale, continued from day to day for a month, lots sold prior to the year 1796, when the purchasers had failed to make the stipulated payments. The proceeds of the sales extending over such a period amounted to only a little more than one half of the first instalment of $50,000 of the Maryland loan. The depreciation in values was such that only a portion of the purchase money agreed to be paid nine years before and still due was realized.[2] The proceeds of the sale were applied to the payment of the loan and the balance as well as the other Maryland loans were paid from the federal treasury. Occasional sales of lots supplied the funds to maintain the offices of the superintendent and the surveyor of the city, the latter

[1] So fully accepted was the theory of the care of the streets as a purely municipal function, that there is no record in the early years of an attempt to secure the help of congress. What the expectations of citizens in this particular had been may be inferred from statements in a letter written in 1837 by Daniel Carroll of Duddington, who asserted that he remembered perfectly "that the general opinion was, that so great was the gift, that the citizens would never be subject to taxation for the improvement of the streets." Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 11, p. 219.

[2] Report of the superintendent. American State Papers. Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 337. A typical case is shown in a court suit. In 1793 Morris and Greenleaf agreed to pay $287 for two lots at the northwest corner of 18th and K streets, N. W. Seven years later they were resold by the commissioners for $216, and the purchase money being still unpaid they were again sold for $80. C. C. Reports. Cranch, Vol. 1, p. 269.

having been created by the law of 1803. The government as a lot owner shared the same fate as the individual, as its property also became unsalable. No doubt such a condition, especially in the absence of any definite government policy, resulted for the time at least in the conservation of this class of the public property. It spelled ruin to numbers of lot owners, while at the same time an excellent purpose was served in checking the spread of the pernicious ground rent system. Of so little consequence were the public lots in the current thought of the time, that they did not even attract the attention of the class of people who are ready with schemes for making use of government property. Some nine years passed before an attempt was made even from such a source. Then a petition was received in the house asking that the public lots be sold and the proceeds used as a fund for the proposed National University.[1] But the committee to which the paper was referred informed the house that the value of the property fell short of the amount required. Nothing more was done. With the exception of an occasional sale, the public holdings of this character remained intact for more than twenty years.

Quite different was the course pursued relative to the large tracts of unoccupied land known as reservations, which were designed by L'Enfant to be laid out as parks and adorned by public buildings and by statuary and fountains. No attempt was made for nearly fifty years to adorn the city at federal expense with parks and fountains except in the case of the grounds about the capitol and the president's house. For the first ten years congress did nothing at all. The citizens found a use for these public spaces, as well as for the unoccupied lots and the streets which extended on paper far into the country or the rural city area. In some cases the fences about the original holdings had not been disturbed, and within waving crops of corn and other grains rewarded the industrious husbandman who ran his furrows without thought of the lines of the paper streets and avenues.[2] In

[1] Annals of Congress, 11th Cong., 3d Sess., Feb. 18, 1811.

[2] A curious illustration of the rural state of the city is found in

fact, so entirely without use for residence purposes was the largest part of the city's area that sections of the unopened streets were included with the adjoining squares and cultivated. How much in anticipation of the needs of the city was the provision made is evident from the circumstance that it was not until the year 1820 that enclosures of city streets and avenues were forbidden, but then under such conditions that probably little change was made.[1]

It was a city ordinance that restricted the enclosure of streets, not an act of congress. The money spent on opening and improving the thoroughfares came from the local tax payers. The exceptions for the first quarter of a century occurred in the years 1803 and 1807 when money from the federal treasury was expended on Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol, the president's house and the public offices.[2]

At the same time such appropriations merely supplemented municipal expenditures for the same purpose. The first general recognition by congress of any responsibility for the care of streets is to be found in the clause of the city charter of 1820. But that was inadequate as well as uncertain, as it provided for reimbursing the city for the cost of improving sections of streets in front of government property from the proceeds of the sale of public lots. When some of the unnamed avenues in the city plan came to be designated, the city council was the sponsor.[3] The federal surveyor of the city was given

an advertisement in the *Intelligencer*, of June 22, 1813, offering for sale a large quantity of rye growing on a lot of about ten acres on East Capitol Street, "near the Capitol."

[1] City Ordinance, May 26, 1820. A fence could not be erected in a street or the street obstructed without first obtaining a written permit from the mayor. The mayor was also given authority to permit enclosures to remain when it could be done without public inconvenience.

[2] Message from the president of the United States transmitting accounts stating the several sums expended, etc., in Washington, Dec. 23, 1806. Statement of Joseph Elgar, commissioner of public buildings. 22d Cong., 1st Sess., House Report, No. 291, Feb. 15, 1832.

[3] Res. City Council, Oct. 19, 1818. However the approval of the president of the United States was sought and obtained. The avenues named at that time were Tennessee, Louisiana, Ohio, and Indiana.

authority to make subdivisions of squares and lots and also to fix the building line and level of the streets. The scope of the management of the streets by the municipality finds an illustration in the creation by the city council of the office of surveyor of the city with the duty "to lay down, point out and mark the line and graduation" of the city thoroughfares.[1] As all the records relating to the survey of the city and the city squares were in the custody of the superintendent and he refused to relinquish the custody, although perfectly willing to allow the municipal officer to make copies, the city council declined to confirm the nomination of Robert King, and instead appointed Benjamin H. Latrobe who was the federal surveyor. He was paid for his services out of the city treasury.[2]

There was, however, a large proportion of the public property that remained unfenced, and there the cows of the citizens were sent to pasturage, thus reproducing for the first time in a latitude as far south as Washington a condition familiar throughout New England where the commons used as a cow pasturage was a feature of the town site. In the course of time the grasping nature of man wrought a change. Portions of the public domain, including the mall from 3d Street to the Potomac were fenced in by individuals who had not even the shadow of the claim put forth by the original proprietors.[3] Corn and other crops were planted. The citizens generally were debarred. As their accustomed privilege was taken away, they became indignant. Finally a meeting of the citizens of the first and second wards which at that time comprised the entire city west of 2d Street, W. was held,[4] and a memorial to the president was adopted protesting against the enclosure of the city pasture grounds by individuals. Not only were the commons of that day the mall, but also the squares designated for the national church, the judiciary and the mint.[5] But the fences were defended. It was claimed that under the deeds of trust exe-

[1] City Ordinance, Aug. 3, 1815. Journal Common Council. Vol. 4, July 31, 1815.

[2] Jour. Bd. of Alder. Vol. 5, Aug. 3, Sept. 12, and Oct. 10, 1815.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 28, 1834.

[4] Same, Sept. 21, 1811.

[5] Same, Sept. 28, 1811.

cuted by the landowners, they had the right to continue in the occupation of the land until it was occupied for the use of the United States. "Several of the proprietors," it was stated, "have up to this moment preserved their enclosures." [1] Six years previously congress had been asked to give permission to individuals to enclose the unoccupied public ground on the condition of cultivation and improvement.[2] The request was not granted. Now it was publicly shown that the public grounds were being used for private purposes without authority. For the first time since the land had been acquired by the government such a question was raised. There had been no legislation by congress on the subject of the control and uses of the property authorized to be acquired by the residence law of 1790. By that measure the entire control was vested in the president.

The squatter contest, as it might be termed, was carried to congress, with the result that by two measures [3] congress enlarged the powers of the president and authorized him to allow the corporation to occupy and improve for public purposes any part of the public property while the other enactment conferred on the president the power to lease for a term not exceeding ten years the public grounds "on such terms and conditions as in his judgment may best effect the improvement of the said grounds for public walks, botanic gardens or other public uses." [4] The apparent purpose of the legislation was to enlist the aid of private enterprise in developing public property, for there was no suggestion then or for many years later of the policy which has been followed so successfully for the past thirty years, due to a change in public opinion and which has not only placed on an equitable basis the financial relations of the federal government to the District but liberally uses

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 26, 1811.

[2] Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 36, 1805.

[3] United States Laws, May 4, and July 5, 1812.

[4] Eight years later the president gave permission to the Columbian Institute, an association formed in Washington for scientific purposes in 1816, to establish a botanic garden on the public grounds just west of the capitol. *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1820, and Aug. 30, 1837.

public money in making a city worthy to be the capital of the nation. It was evident that congress had in mind more especially a change in the surroundings of Pennsylvania Avenue, especially that section on the south side between 6th Street and the capitol. For the romantic beauty of the Tiber which flowed in this locality near the city's principal thoroughfare and which was so much admired in the early days when its banks were shaded by the luxuriant foliage of trees and flowering shrubs had disappeared. The waters as they crossed Pennsylvania Avenue from the north flowed into the canal and the old bed of the stream to the south soon became "a pestiferous swamp," a fruitful source for many years "of the agues and bilious fevers from which not a family escapes." [1] When the members of congress returned to the city in the fall of 1811 they were in dread of the bilious fever which had wrought its work of death in the city during the summer and which was attributed to the unfinished canal.[2] But whatever the purpose of the legislation nothing of consequence was accomplished, as neither the municipality nor individuals, except the Columbian Institute, attempted to make use of the public property under such conditions.

But something more was necessary, the city authorities early realized, than to merely provide highways between the groups of villages that formed the infant city or even opening neighborhood streets. For the produce of the adjoining country must be attracted to the city, not merely to benefit the local market and local stores, but there was also the influence of the conception which dwindled, as experience ripened, of the new city as a great commercial centre like Baltimore. For many years were to elapse before it was realized that the capital city of the nation was to prove an exception in the history of the development of cities and that it was to grow great merely as a centre of population and without the usual aids of commerce and manufactures. At that time, however, it was recog-

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 22, 1822.

[2] Memoirs and letters of Dolly Madison, p. 81. Mrs. Madison to Mr. and Mrs. Joel Barlow, Nov. 15, 1811.

nized that if the main thoroughfares in Montgomery County led to Georgetown but not to Washington, citizens of the latter place would be at a great trade disadvantage. At any rate, in the absence of contemporary comment on the ordinance passed at the very first session of the city council in the fall of 1802 for "opening, clearing and making passable for wagons" 14th Street from F Street to the northern bounds of the city, it is quite evident this law was an effort to correct such a defect in the position of the city. For it must be borne in mind that the northern boundary of the city west of 7th Street coincided exactly with the course of the old post road between Baltimore and Georgetown. One of the roads to Frederick was brought to this entrance to Georgetown via the Rock Creek Church Road and the Columbia Road of to-day. On the other hand, the southern portion of 14th Street touched what was even then becoming the principal centre of the city, although then merely a narrow fringe of buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol and the president's house.[1]

The Centre Market was located there and there also in the fall of 1801 was removed from Capitol Hill the office of the *Intelligencer*, the only newspaper in the city,[2] and right across Pennsylvania Avenue, at the northwest corner of that thoroughfare and 6th Street, William Duane, printer and leading Republican politician of Philadelphia, had established a book-store and printing office. His only rival in business and the first in the field, Rapine, Conrad and Co., were still at the corner of New Jersey Avenue and B streets, S. E., where they had been since the fall of 1800. Just to the west of Duane's book-store had been opened, in the year 1804, the Woodward Tavern by William Woodward, the first hotel to be located in that part of Pennsylvania Avenue which lies midway between the capitol and the

[1] Thomas Law, in his pamphlet on the Washington City Canal published in 1804, states that during the previous year, the greatest number of buildings were erected along Pennsylvania Avenue and the intersecting streets between the president's house and the capitol.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 12, 1807. Advertisement of sale of lots 4 and 5, Square 461, "now occupied by Samuel H. Smith and Miss Finnigan."

president's house.[1] In the same year the Centre House Inn was opened by Solomon Myer at the southwest corner of 9th and D streets, N. W.[2] A year later Mr. Myer leased the Woodward Tavern, and his former location was occupied by the printing office of the Messrs. Andrew and George Way.[3] As early as 1806 the stage-coaches between Baltimore and Washington stopped at the Pennsylvania House and Myer's City Tavern, as the place was called, which indicates that Pennsylvania Avenue at that time was used in part at least as the post-road through the city.[4]

Farther west on the avenue at Nos. 1417–1423 was the two-story and attic hotel of William Lovell, which in 1804 passed under the direction of William Rhodes, who had managed for a number of years the tavern at the northeast corner of 15th and F streets. Rhodes Hotel, as it came to be known, continued under the same management for eight years, when James McLeod became the proprietor and revived the original name of the Washington Hotel, which he conducted until the spring of 1815.[5] In the meantime Rhodes' old stand at the northeast

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 28, 1804. Notice of the opening of the hotel.

[2] The same, Oct. 24, 1804.

[3] The same, July 29, 1805, and May 12, 1806. It is inferred that one of the brothers was a member of the printing firm of Way and Groff whose name appears in a Washington imprint as early as 1801.

[4] The Pennsylvania Tavern came under the management of George W. Lindsay upon the expiration of Mr. Myer's lease on the 20th of June, 1808. In the summer of 1810 John Davis became the proprietor and named the house the Indian Queen Hotel. It soon became the leading hostelry in the city. The Metropolitan Hotel of to-day occupies a portion of this site. For a short period it was known as McKeowins. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 15, 1815.

[5] An unusual feature of the tavern of that day was provided by Mr. McLeod, who announced in an advertisement (*Intelligencer*, July 14, 1814) he had added two rooms for bathing to his establishment. The first mention of such a facility for the general public is to be found in an advertisement of J. Wheaton (*Intelligencer*, Aug. 1, 1812), who states he has "warm, temperate, and cold baths which he offers for the use of his fellow-citizens. Terms, three warm and four cold baths for 100 cents." No location is mentioned. It may be inferred that this venture was not successful. What came to be known as the Washington Public Baths were established by Frederick Shuck (*Intelligencer*, June 3, 1813), in a building on the north side of C Street, between 4½ and

corner of 15th and F streets, N. W., had a new proprietor in Joseph M. Semmes, who continued there until 1807. Then the place became a boarding-house under the management of Mrs. Suter. In the year 1814 the property became the home of the Bank of the Metropolis.

In some respects it is possible to trace the development of what became the principal centre of the city in the fluctuating and uncertain fortunes of the hotels; for nearly a fifth of the nineteenth century had passed before the hotel business became firmly fixed in the central section. Until nearly the close of this period three hotels closely grouped about the capitol apparently had the chief part of what prosperity there was in keeping a Washington hotel. For while during the sessions of congress the patronage was good, yet, owing to the preference for boarding-houses, the taverns of the day did not enjoy to the full even the business that was available for only a part of each year.[1]

The two Pennsylvania Avenue hotels, separated by a distance of eight blocks, had a struggling time in the early years, while those in the vicinity of the capitol did not fare much better, due no doubt in part to the short business season, and then to the competition of the boarding-houses where the congressional "messes," as they were called, or groups of congenial spirits ate and slept. About Davis's tavern and later on about the Washington tavern as well as about the Capitol Hill hotels sprang up the boarding-house, and as both occupied the same class of building — the two-story and attic house of the day — there was not much to choose from in the exterior appearance. The tavern enjoyed the advantage of a popular social centre of the day, and generally the birthday balls and other festivities

6th streets, N. W. (lot 6, Square 490). (*Intelligencer*, Feb. 22, 1816.) The water was piped from the spring in that square.

[1] The preference shown boarding-houses is indicated no doubt by the course of members of congress in this respect. According to the printed lists of "Places of abode of members of both Houses," the early form of the Congressional Directory, in 1805, 18 per cent lived in hotels, in 1807, 15 per cent, in 1809, 11 per cent and in 1816, 20 per cent.

were held there. It is probably because the tavern was a place for gatherings of all sorts that the boarding-houses were grouped about them.[1] The oldest hotel in use during this period was Tunnicliff's on A Street, just east of the southeast corner of 1st and A streets, N. E.[2] What was apparently a smaller structure was erected prior to 1802 by Daniel Carroll on the square, now a part of the capitol grounds, bounded by A, B and 1st streets and Delaware Avenue, N. E.[3] The most notable hotel structure of the day was erected in 1805 by Daniel Carroll on 1st Street between East Capitol and A streets, S. E. It was the centre building of three three-story structures, constituting what became known as Carroll Row and was said to contain fifty rooms.[4]

[1] What appears to be a rather complete list of a man's wardrobe of that period is found in an advertisement in the *Intelligencer* of June 22, 1807, in which Samuel Speake, auctioneer, gives notice that he offers for sale at his auction room on F Street the property of Daniel M. Neall seized for boarding and lodging by Mrs. Thompson at the Six Buildings: to wit, a black surtout coat, black cloth coat, pantaloons and vest, three pairs of boots, and two pairs of shoes, one blue cloth coat, three blue cloth military coats, four new ruffled muslin shirts, seven new plain shirts and one linen shirt, one pair of cloth pantaloons, three flannel jackets, one pair of drawers, three sheets, two pillow cases, two pairs of silk hose, one pair of gloves, with a great variety of other wearing apparel.

[2] The hotel was conducted by William Tunnicliff, 1794–1804; by Pontius D. Stelle from 1804–1805 and by Samuel J. Coolidge, 1810–1812. In 1814 Robert Long was the proprietor and was followed by John McLeod.

[3] Pontius D. Stelle was the first proprietor and left it finally in 1804. He was succeeded by William R. King, who had kept a tavern near the navy-yard, and then by Frost and Quinn. (*Intelligencer*, Nov. 14, 1806.) George W. Lindsay, the next proprietor, called the place the Lindsay House (*Intelligencer*, Oct. 19, 1807), and remained there until 1809. Robert Long was a tenant for about a year, when he was succeeded by B. H. Tomlinson, who gave it the name of the City Hotel. It was known as Tomlinson's Hotel when it was destroyed by the British.

[4] Pontius D. Stelle was the first proprietor, remaining there from 1805 to 1809. (*Intelligencer*, Nov. 13, 1805.) He was succeeded by Robert Long, who after a year's experience gave up his lease. After the year 1810 there is no record that the building was occupied for six years for hotel purposes. Then it was leased by N. L. Queen and christened Queen's Hotel. (*Intelligencer*, Jan. 5, 1816.)

It was a boarding-house that was the nucleus of the famous Franklin House on the north side of I Street or Pennsylvania Avenue, between 20th and 21st. But it was not until 1813 or some dozen years after the proprietor, William O'Neal, started in the business that it arose to the dignity of a tavern. At an early period the enterprise of the proprietor led him to run stages between his place and the capitol for the use of the members of congress who lived at his house. Beyond O'Neal's a few members of congress found lodgings in the Union Tavern at Georgetown, where Mr. McLaughlin was the host until about the year 1807, when he was succeeded by William Crawford.[1]

It was in the central section of the city the pioneer theatre building was erected and where on the 16th of November, 1804, the opening performance was given. As the result of several public meetings a company was formed, and sufficient money was secured by the sale of stock to buy a site at the northeast corner of 11th and C streets, N. W., and put up a building. The enterprise was financed with difficulty, as more than a year passed after the building was started before it was completed, and in the last months the device was resorted to of disposing of twelve passes at $200 each, subject to redemption after seven years.[2] Here on the Tiber at 12th Street was built the first corporation wharf,[3] and when in the same year the city council provided for holding fairs "for the sale of all kinds of cattle, goods, wares and merchandise" in May and November of each year, the place selected by the mayor was the Mall "extending from the bridge at Centre Market to the river Potomac." [4] In addition to the opportunities for selling merchandise, premiums were offered for the best specimens of the

[1] Advertisement of the trustees offering the property for sale. *Intelligencer*, May 6, 1807.

[2] Early Theatres in Washington City. A. I. Mudd. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 5. The first board of directors of the company was composed of John P. Van Ness, Samuel Harrison Smith, Robert Brent, William Brent and Thomas Law.

[3] City Ordinance, July 24, 1804. The city also built a wharf at the foot of 17th Street. The wharfage charges were a source of city revenue.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 14, 1804. The first fair was held in November, 1804, but the fourth held in May, 1806, proved to be the last.

various kinds of live stock sold during the fair. The city authorities not only provided by the opening of 14th Street, which with the other roads would enable the people of the adjoining state of Maryland to come to the city without going to Georgetown but they sought to attract them there by the old Maryland custom of holding fairs — annual gatherings where business could be done, acquaintances renewed and the excitement and pleasures of the town could be enjoyed and experienced.

When the Washington Library was opened in the year 1812, the location selected was a room on the first floor of a house owned by Esias Travers on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 13th and 13½ streets, N. W. At that time it was thought to be a little too far west, but there it remained for five years. The year previous the Union Circulating Library had been started by Joseph Mulligan, a Georgetown bookseller, but at the time the Washington enterprise began he had found it was not meeting expenses and made a public appeal for more generous support, which was evidently given, for the library continued until the year 1819, when the books were sold at auction.[1] The constitution of the Washington Library was based upon that of the Alexandria Library and was prepared by a committee appointed at a meeting held by those interested the first month of the year 1811.[2] Subscriptions were solicited by a committee consisting of John Hewitt, Rev. James Laurie, Samuel H. Smith, William James, James H. Blake, Henry Herford, Robert Brent, Joel Barlow, William Cranch, John Law, Franklin Wharton, Thomas Munroe and Joseph Stretch. The response was of such a character that in the course of two months a meeting of the shareholders was held and directors were chosen.[3]

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 14, 1812, and May 20, 1819. Catalogues were published in 1813 and in 1815. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7, p. 34.

[2] The same, Jan. 26, 1811. The journal of the meetings of the directors of the library company in three manuscript volumes is in the library of congress and was drawn from by W. Dawson Johnston in his History of the Washington Library Co. and Other Local Libraries, in Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7.

[3] The same, April 2, 1811. The directors were as follows: Rev. James Laurie, president; Buckner Thurston, Samuel H. Smith, William James, John Hewitt, Abraham Bradley, Jr., and Joseph

Jonathan S. Findlay, who was the principal of a school on F Street near 13th, was in charge as librarian when the opening day of March 21, 1812, came around. The library was opened for two hours, two days in the week, but like all libraries of the kind only shareholders were allowed to take out books. In less than three years the collection contained 900 volumes, and a catalogue was printed.[1]

At last the city was supplied with what had been recognized for a number of years as an important need. As will be recalled the trustees of the public schools in 1804 proposed a library as one of the branches of the school system, and some five years later a plan was discussed, more elaborate in its scope, of establishing a library for the county of Washington to occupy a building that should have for a site an entire square.[2] For five years the library continued with growing success, and then what was thought a mistake in its original position was corrected when it was removed to the book-store of Gideon Davis on Pennsylvania Avenue near 11th Street. Mr. Davis became the librarian, and before his term of service ended three years later the collection numbered 1238 volumes and a second catalogue was issued. It was then open daily except Sunday.

In the meantime, by act of congress of April 18, 1814, the library company had a charter which was similar in its provisions to that of the first chartered library in the District, the Columbian Library of Georgetown, which had been made a body corporate by act of congress of Jan. 31, 1804.[3] It is apparent the Columbian Library went out of existence some time before the year 1810, as at that time the Union Circulating Library was established.

Stretch. The shares cost $12 and the annual assessment was $3. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7, pp. 22 and 29.

[1] After the destruction of the library of congress by the British the use of this library was tendered to congress as was also the case with the Union Circulating Library of Georgetown.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 21, 1809.

[3] The incorporators were Stephen B. Balch, Joseph Nourse, Charles D. Green, John Craven, Francis Lowndes, Jr. and George French.

The opening of 14th Street was the first long stretch of street improvement undertaken by the city government. A year later in 1803, while federal officers were spending public money on Pennsylvania Avenue between the capitol and the president's house, to an extent that remained without a parallel for many a year, the city fathers attempted to do something with the section of that thoroughfare between the capitol and 15th Street, E. As the word "repairing" is used in the local ordinance, it may be inferred that this portion had already been opened. It is not unlikely that, to some extent at least, the new street followed the line of the old road from the ferry.

The city appropriation was supplemented by a contribution from the bridge company which bore the heavy expense, as it was termed, of getting in shape the section down the hill to 15th Street.[1] While the share in the improvement undertaken by the bridge company was voluntary, that was not the case with the upper bridge company; for the city fathers, a year later, made as a condition of opening East Capitol Street, from 1st to 18th streets, E., that the company should make a road from that point to the entrance of the bridge that was then being erected.[2] But a more direct connection with the great highway between Baltimore and Frederick, and more especially with Montgomery County, was sought by an extension of 14th Street, north to the Columbia Road of to-day, a distance of only about half a mile and much shorter than the existing road via Florida Avenue to Connecticut Avenue, and thence north along Columbia Road. The city council appointed a joint committee "to wait" on Robert Peter and Anthony Holmead's heirs for the purpose of securing their consent to the extension of New Jersey Avenue and 14th Street through their lands "until they shall intersect the road leading from Frederick Town by Rock Creek Church to Georgetown."[3]

[1] *Intelligencer*, May 28, 1804.

[2] City Ordinance, Nov. 29, 1805. The road to the bridge did not conform to the plan of the city. As late as 1817 it was referred to in a city appropriation bill as "the road within the city leading from East Capitol Street to the upper bridge over the Eastern Branch."

[3] Journal common council, Vol. 1, June 23, 1806.

Earlier in the year a petition to congress from citizens of Washington had been presented in the house,[1] asking that such a road be opened. But no action was taken by congress, and the council committee accomplished nothing. Up to this time New Jersey Avenue, north of the capitol, had not been opened. Three years later the improvement was authorized, and in the same measure was included the opening of 7th Street, from Pennsylvania Avenue to the northern bounds.[2] Some ten years later the writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer* stated that 14th Street was the only road by which the centre of the city can be entered direct from Montgomery County.[3] In a vein of satirical protest against the course of the city fathers, who were frequently and freely criticised in the columns of the newspapers, for neglecting the general interests of the community, he asserted that street improvements were decided upon by the city council on a give-and-take policy, members casting their votes with the understanding that those whose property was to be benefited would in turn provide improvements in localities where their property was situated.[4] It is quite evident from the attempts made in 1806 that the opening of 14th Street had not accomplished what was expected four years earlier. But conditions had changed. It was in the year 1806 that the corporation decided to establish a tobacco inspection house on the Eastern Branch.[5] Up to this time Georgetown had undisputed control

[1] Annals, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 324, January, 1806.

[2] City Ordinance, Dec. 9, 1809.

[3] *Intelligencer*, April 1, 1819.

[4] The charge of self-interest brought against the city fathers was by no means a new one. Five years previously a writer of a communication to the *Intelligencer* (Feb. 28, 1814) asserted that there had been no session of the city council for the past three months, owing to lack of a quorum. He explained this indifference to the public business by asserting that as soon as the members had secured road improvements before their own property, then they had no further interest in city affairs.

[5] Letter from John Law and Daniel Carroll of Duddington, offering, as a donation, lots 13 and 14, Square 801, between M and N and 3d and 4th streets, S. E. Journal Common Council, Vol. 1, Oct. 20, 1806. City Ordinance, Nov. 10, 1806. Making an appropriation to erect the building on that site.

of the tobacco trade for a large area of country and only the previous year had substituted for the old Maryland law an elaborate law.[1] It was a struggle entered into between the two towns for a declining trade. Fifteen years before this period three inspection houses and six inspectors were provided for Georgetown,[2] while in 1806, even before trade began to decline under the influence of the Berlin decree that affected most vitally the foreign commerce of the United States, two inspection houses and two inspectors were sufficient.

The Washington authorities started modestly enough with one inspection house and one inspector, and as the event proved, the business never required an enlargement. The establishment of such a centre makes clear the need not only of opening New Jersey Avenue, but also of directly connecting it with northern Maryland. But tobacco was not the sole interest. Along the Eastern Branch, a block to the west of the tobacco house site, stood the sugar-house then occupied as a brewery by Dr. John Coningham. He had sold out the brewery which he with others had established in the western section of the city.[3] Both the navy-yard and the arsenal became industrial centres of importance soon after the opening of the century. The building and equipment of ships and the repair of guns, the making of gun carriages, etc., gave employment to a considerable number of workmen who made their homes in the immediate locality. The navy-yard settlement, or Navy Yard Hill, as it was termed, was always the largest of the two, and very early became one of the most flourishing of the villages or groups of settlements within the urban limits.[4] While the dry-dock

[1] Georgetown Ordinance, July 1, 1805.

[2] Maryland law, Dec. 21, 1790.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 2,1805. As the Washington brewery, the Eastern Branch establishment continued in business for a good many years. It was the only one in the city. (*Intelligencer*, June 11, 1807, and Dec. 28, 1811.) The brewery of Herford and Sons at the southwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 9th Street, N. W., was only in use for a few years. (*Intelligencer*, July 4, 1808.)

[4] A writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer* of March 26, 1816, attributes the development of the navy-yard section to the policy adopted in 1802 by the navy department in not employing slaves.

scheme of the president was not carried out, yet the interests of the establishment did not suffer. Events beyond the control of the peace-loving Jefferson required in the course of a few years not only navy vessels to be kept afloat but manned and equipped for service in the Mediterranean, and then later additional vessels were built in consequence of the British aggressions on American commerce. Latrobe, who prepared the report on the dry-dock, was soon more usefully employed on a plan for the arrangement of the yard, the erection of the wall and of the gate at the foot of 8th Street and the building of the various structures.[1] The year 1805 marks the beginning of a period of activity in the yard, which continued for a number of years. Up to the year 1806 more than double the money spent in any navy-yard in the country had been expended in the Washington yard.[2] In that year over two hundred men were employed, and the work which up to that time had been confined to the repair and equipment of vessels was broadened out to include their building. Three gunboats, wooden vessels, of course, marked the beginning of shipbuilding, and their cost ranged from $10,000 to $15,000 each. In addition to the buildings where the work was carried on, a house erected in 1801, east of the gate, was occupied by the second officer, while Captain Thomas Tingey, the commandant, lived outside of the yard, and then in the year 1807 the erection of a house for his use was begun in the centre of the north portion of the grounds. On the occasion of the launching of the United States brig, the *Hornet*, the invited guests watched with interest "the operations of the steam engine lately erected, which was then at work."[3] Besides the value to the community of the navy-yard in pro-

"The result is," he added, "white men with their families came and built houses and soon made a town."

[1] Latrobe's plan approved in the year 1804–1805. Navy-yard, Washington. History from Organization. Henry B. Hibben. 51st Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 22, 1890.

[2] American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 103.

[3] *Intelligencer*, May 14, 1811. Warden, in his Chorographical Description, p. 37, states that in 1811 the public buildings at the navy-yard were a workshop 900 feet in length and three large brick buildings for the reception of naval stores.

viding employment, it also provided a market for supplies of various kinds. Not the least important were the ropes used on the sail-propelled vessels of the day. The making of ropes was not undertaken by the government, but was left to private enterprise. From the rope walk of Richard Parrott on the north side of R Street, near the head of 30th Street, came the ropes that were used on the frigate *President* in the year 1809.[1] At that time there were two rope-making concerns in Washington. One was under the management of Tench Ringgold and Nathaniel K. Heath in the square bounded by 3d, 4½, I and K streets, S. W.[2] John Chalmers had a rope factory at the lower end of Greenleaf's Point,[3] which was near the barracks, where a small detachment of the regular army was stationed and where in the year 1803 a building for use as an arsenal and designed by George Hadfield was erected.[4] To the Washington arsenal were brought as a distributing centre guns from the government manufactories at Harpers Ferry and Springfield and cannon from the Foxall foundry near Georgetown, as well as armament that had seen service. Men were employed to mend and clean guns and to provide fittings and carriages for the cannon. As early as the year 1804 Andrew J. Villard, a Frenchman, began his long term of service at the Washington arsenal, where he invented a disappearing carriage for cannon. At one time it was proposed to establish a gun foundry at Greenleaf Point, but that was not done.[5] A powder magazine in addition to the one near the Little Falls was early made a feature of the buildings at the Point.

As these industries operated by the government expanded with the growth of the country and the consequent enlargement of the scope of public administration, the same influence was

[1] Hibben, p. 43.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 17, 1810 and June 21, 1814. The partnership was dissolved and the business was continued by Heath. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 31, 1812, and in 1814 Daniel Renner was associated with Mr. Heath.

[3] The same, Nov. 2, 1810.

[4] American State Papers, Military, Vol. 1, p. 179.

[5] The same, Vol. 1, p. 215. Letter of Henry Foxall, August, 1807.

manifested in the executive departments, the civil branches of the government. It was not, however, until the first decade of the city as the seat of government was coming to a close that the increase in the number of government employees resulted in action by congress. After that body had been informed of the crowded condition in the southwest executive office, where all but one of the five departments were housed, then an appropriation of $10,000 was made to purchase the Blodgett Hotel building and a urther amount of $3628 was expended in 1810 in fitting up the interior for the use of the general post-office and the patent office. Up to that time the twenty-five rooms available in the department building were apportioned, eight to the war department, six to the navy department, four to the state department, to which the patent office was attached and four to the post-office department. The city post-office, the superintendent of the city and the surveyor of the city had each one room.[1] Although attention was called to the disorder and confusion of the records of the government, both for the period preceding the adoption of the constitution and afterwards, yet no specific provision was made for their care and preservation. No change was made then in the policy which has continued down to the present day, of relying upon such arrangements as could be made in the department buildings for the storing of the old records.

The commercial interests of the city were further sought to be advanced by the formation of the Commercial Co., with a capital stock of $100,000.[2] This new concern was located at Barry's wharf at the foot of New Jersey Avenue, a close neighbor to the tobacco inspection house and the brewery.[3] So successful was this venture at the outset that a dividend of

[1] Report of committee appointed to inquire into the state of the ancient records, March 27, 1810. Message from the president transmitting report of the superintendent of the city relative to the building, Jan. 25, 1811.

[2] *Intelligencer*, April 20, 1808. In the issue of Aug. 5, 1808, is an advertisement of the Commercial Co., announcing wines, sugar, tea, crockery ware for sale. Also that the highest price will be paid for country produce.

[3] The same, Oct. 8, 1810.

five per cent was paid at the close of the first six months.[1] Six years later the capital stock was increased.[2] No doubt the career of the Washington company led Georgetown citizens the same year to form the Georgetown Commercial Co., with a capital of $500,000.[3] However, in the course of the next three years the Washington company had gone out of existence.[4] While the commercial company was designed to accomplish on a large scale what was done by individuals in providing a market for the produce of the farmer and in turn supplying him with groceries and clothing, a more ambitious as well as patriotic scheme was developed. It grew out of the intense public revolt against the oppressive trade regulations during the Napoleonic period. National pride as well as the necessities of the situation, when commerce had come to a standstill, aroused the people throughout the country to the importance of developing domestic manufactures. It was this influence that led one of the chambers of the city council to recommend that the members appear in homespun when they went in a body on the 4th of July to pay their respects to the president.[5] It was under such conditions that the Columbia Manufacturing Co. was organized "for making cotton, wool, hemp, and flax and the promotion of such other domestic manufactures as may be thought advisable."[6] But it was the third attempt.[7] In the course of a year enough stock had been subscribed to warrant the company in making a beginning in spinning cotton. A building was rented on Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th and 15th streets, where the necessary machinery purchased in Philadelphia was set up.[8] But even at that time only 400 of the 2000 shares par value $25 had been subscribed.[9] In less than

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 8, 1809.
[2] The same, April 5, 1815.
[3] The same, Oct. 6, 1815.
[4] The same, April 6, 1818.
[5] Journal 1st Chamber, Vol. 3, June 20, 1810. The earliest journal of the city council that has been preserved shows that the official call on that day was the custom in 1805.
[6] *Intelligencer*, July 13, 1808.
[7] Same, Feb. 15, 1809.
[8] Same, Aug. 23, 1809. The plant was moved to E Street between 7th and 8th streets, N. W., Oct. 19, 1810, and finally near Greenleaf Point.
[9] Same, Nov. 24, 1809. Report of the president of the company, Robert Brent, who was also the mayor of the city.

four years the property was offered for sale and the company dissolved.[1] These abortive attempts to establish manufacturing plants and to broaden the trade of the city were not confined to the area of the city. A manufactory of cotton twist was located at Four Mile Run in Alexandria County.[2] A mill on the property of Benjamin Stoddert at Bladensburg was converted into a gun powder manufactory by his son-in-law, Dr. Thomas Ewell, and associates.[3] But before the close of a year the building was destroyed by fire. The business was resumed, but in another year a new plant was built on the Potomac canal about three miles from Georgetown,[4] and the Bladensburg works were continued after an interval of some four years under a new management. Like the Foxall gun foundry in the immediate vicinity, the Ewell enterprise was primarily to furnish supplies to the government.[5] In the spring of 1813 the Georgetown Wool and Cotton Manufactory was started in Mr. Parrott's mill on Rock Creek, east of the rope walk.[6] The new establishment was near the Mill Road, a section of which still exists, crossing P Street at 27th. It led to Federal Mills, known in later years as Lyon Mills, which was built by Joseph E. Rowles as early as 1795, and is the oldest flour mill that remains, although it has not been used in recent years. The old building stands on the Washington side of Rock Creek, a short distance north of P Street. On the south side of P Street, and on the same side of Rock Creek, stood a paper mill. It occupied a portion of the Kalorama tract which was sold by the owner of the property, Gustavus Scott, in the year 1800, with the agreement expressed in the deed that the purchaser, Nicholas Lingan, was to erect a mill.[7] Five years later Edgar Patterson became the owner, and it is supposed

[1] *Intelligencer*, April 1 and 13, 1813.
[2] Same, Oct. 3, 1810.
[3] Same, Oct. 17, 1811, and July 14, 1812.
[4] Same, Sept. 15, 1813.
[5] Same, Jan. 19, 1813.
[6] Same, May 11, 1813. Associated with Mr. Parrott in this undertaking were I. and W. Westerman, English manufacturers.
[7] Land Records, Liber N, f. 183. *Intelligencer*, May 18, 1818, and Dec. 29, 1821.

the manufacture of paper began about that time.[1] What proved to be the most enduring of all these enterprises were glass works established by Edwards, Way and Co., on portions of the two squares bounded by 21st, 22d and C streets and the Potomac.[2] The product for the most part supplied the local demand for window panes. The business was continued with but one interruption of about a year, for thirty years.[3] But in spite of these hopes and efforts, manufacturing enterprises did not flourish, and in the course of a decade practically had about disappeared.[4] Exactly why the capital city in this respect differed from other places of the same size is difficult to determine. The judgment of one contemporary attributes the condition to "a mistaken notion of the large land proprietors who hold their property at too high a rate." [5] While as late as 1816, the mayor in his annual message expressed the conviction that "there is every prospect of this becoming a commercial city in a few years." [6] There is no suggestion of city council log rolling in the action taken soon after the completion of the Potomac Bridge in providing a direct communication between Maryland Avenue, and the centre of the city. This was accomplished by erecting a bridge over the Tiber at 12th and continuing that thoroughfare through the mall south to Maryland Avenue.[7] About the same time 7th Street was continued to Maryland Avenue, but the bridge over which this thoroughfare was carried and which was built in the first instance by the commissioners was approached at each end by

[1] Land Records, Liber A, C., f. 93, July 5, 1811. Edgar Patterson to Elie Williams, Charles Carroll and Daniel Carroll of Duddington.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 1, 1809, and Oct. 26, 1810. Description of the plant, May 6, 1819.

[3] Same, Feb. 13, 1840.

[4] Same, May 13, 1819.

[5] Same, March 25, 1811.

[6] Journal Common Council. Vol. 4, June 17, 1816.

[7] A marked change had taken place in the notions of the relations between the two sections divided by the Tiber, judging from the language of the corporation law of July 24, 1804, in providing for the first wharf built by the city, for it was described as on the Tiber "at the termination of 12th Street W.," as if there was nothing beyond that stream.

causeways through the belt of swampy ground on each side of the Tiber and extending on the north side as far west as 12th Street.

The section of 6th Street south of Maryland Avenue was opened at this time to the two wharves at the foot of 6th and 7th streets, which were among the earliest in the city and the only ones for many years along that section of the river front. Some years passed before the two sections of 6th Street north and south of the mall were joined.

The influence of the road making and canal building activity throughout the eastern portion of the country in the early part of the nineteenth century was felt in Washington, where the main highways extending into Maryland and Virginia were still country roads. To a large extent what was attempted was in advance, if not of the needs of the city, certainly of the financial resources of the citizens. For out of five turnpikes, the construction of which were authorized by congress from 1808 to 1810, only two were built within a period of ten years. One of these was the result of Alexandria capital and extended from the Washington bridge to that city, following more closely the river than the old Alexandria and Georgetown post road. A bridge was built over Four Mile Run near its entrance into the river, while presumably the existing road farther to the west crossed that waterway by a ford.[1] A couple of years later the company of Columbian Turnpikes, composed of Washington men, secured a charter to construct a road from the same centre, west to the District line and toward the Little River turnpike road, an important trade thoroughfare connecting Alexandria with Snickers Gap. By the same act the company was authorized to build turnpikes in the District from the city bounds towards Baltimore and Rockville. But these enterprises lagged. The Rockville road on the line of the extension of 7th Street was not built until some ten years later,

[1] The bill incorporating the Washington and Alexandria Turnpike Co. became a law April 28, 1808. In the *Intelligencer*, of May 11, 1808, the announcement was made that the stock subscription book was opened, and on Dec. 28 in the same medium appeared the call for the fifth and last instalment. The capital was $20,000.

and then not by this company.[1] Within an equal period of time the Baltimore Road was nearly completed.[2] The company was able to build what is still known as the Columbia Road in Alexandria County. It was the only source of revenue from which four years later a dividend was declared.[3] A few weeks before the Potomac bridge was opened for travel, the Washington and Alexandria Turnpike Co. was able to announce that the bridge over Four Mile Run was passable for carriages and horses.[4] At the same time notice was given that a road had been opened from the new highway at a point some three quarters of a mile from the bridge to the Georgetown Road, so that apparently the trade to Georgetown might flow along the new road.[5] In the meantime a charter had been secured from congress to provide for the improvement into a turnpike of the old post road from Mason's ferry to Alexandria, another phase in the commercial struggle between Georgetown and the other two towns.[6]

There is no further reference to this project, and it may be concluded the work was not done. The value of the trade of the country on the Virginia side of the river, which was a potent factor in making Alexandria the most prosperous of the three towns, received early recognition in the erection of a bridge over the Potomac at the Little Falls. No attempt, however, was made to change into a turnpike the road from

[1] United States Law, Feb. 15, 1819, conferring on a Maryland company the rights of the Columbian Company to build the 7th Street pike, now Georgia Avenue.

[2] *Intelligencer*, April 19, 1817, and March 29, 1819.

[3] The same, Jan. 10, 1814. A semi-annual dividend of $8.14 per share declared on the stock of the company of the Columbian Turnpikes.

[4] The same, Feb. 6, 1809.

[5] A road house known as Lindo's Tavern had been opened at this point the previous fall and near Sebastian's Spring. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 28, 1808. In a few years a race track was established in the vicinity. *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1813. "Ladies can be supplied with syllabub under the cow every morning until six and every evening until after seven o'clock," was one of the attractions advertised by Mr. Lindo. *Intelligencer*, May 24, 1809.

[6] United States Law, March 3, 1809.

Georgetown and the contiguous territory of Virginia to the bridge.

In Maryland the good road movement inspired greater interest. About the time the general government made its first and only experiment in road making by beginning the construction of a turnpike designed to extend west from Cumberland, Md., to the Ohio River, the Maryland legislature on Jan. 25, 1806, incorporated a company to build a turnpike from the District line where it crossed the Georgetown-Frederick post road. For Frederick was on the great highway from Baltimore to the western country, and the section of it from Baltimore to within twelve miles of Frederick had by the year 1808 been improved into a turnpike.

As even in Maryland, with its greater population and the aid of public appropriations, and with Baltimore one of the great commercial centres of the country, the financing of such enterprises was difficult, the problem was still harder in the District, where congress, its only legislature, gave no help whatever and the resources were more limited. To remedy this latter defect the Maryland law of 1806 proposed the bringing together in this undertaking the interests of citizens of Georgetown, Washington, Rockville, Frederick and Hagerstown, yet the road was not built. Six years later the charter was revived by the Maryland legislature, and then, by a supplementary measure enacted by congress, the company was authorized to extend its road into the District through Tenleytown [1] to Georgetown. But again the appeal failed to reach the wide range proposed. Nearly a decade passed before any further road making was attempted on the highways leading into the District. The slow progress in such improvements which in that period throughout the country had behind it a strong and enthusiastic public sentiment was attributed at the time to the lack of means, the opposition of Georgetown and the absolute indifference of the

[1] In the Maryland law of Dec. 24, 1812, the name is spelled Tennally Town, and also in the United States law of Feb. 27, 1813. The present accepted spelling is used in the issue of the *City of Washington Gazette* of Sept. 25, 1820.

banks.[1] The latter cause was no doubt emphasized because of the contrast with current conditions in Maryland. For by the year 1813 the policy had been adopted there of exacting as a condition of extending bank charters, liberal subscriptions to the stock of the turnpike to Cumberland. On the other hand, the course of congress in granting District bank charters reflected the prevailing sentiment of the day, which notably in New York and Pennsylvania led the legislatures to refuse bonuses from those wishing to organize banks and to grant the privilege with restrictions intended to prevent the control of these institutions from falling into the hands of a few.

After the charter of the Bank of the United States expired in March, 1811, the state legislatures were busy in creating banks to take its place. Congress did its share, considering the size of the District. For in the year 1811 five banks were authorized to do business, and in the following year another was added to this list. All were not new institutions. The Bank of Alexandria, whose Virginia charter had expired, and the Bank of Potomac, a partnership concern, both of Alexandria, were given charters, while the Farmers Bank and the Mechanics Bank of Alexandria were entirely new institutions. In Georgetown the Bank of Columbia continued under its Maryland charter, while the Union Bank of the same place, organized as a partnership in 1809, was granted two years later the privilege of a bank.

The same course was followed in the case of a similar institution in Washington, the Bank of Washington, which began business Dec. 1, 1809, as a partnership, thus providing the capital city with its first purely local bank, organized by Washington capital and designed to supply local needs, which the only other banking institution in the city, a branch of the Bank of the United States, was not primarily designed to do.[2]

At first the bank occupied one of the houses of Carroll Row

[1] *Intelligencer*, April 24, 1825.

[2] The capital stock of $1,000,000 in shares of $40 each was oversubscribed the first day the subscription books were opened. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 1 and 6, 1809. But only one half of the par value of the shares was paid in.

on the east side of 1st Street, between East Capitol and A streets, S. E. By the end of the first year the bank had paid a dividend of 6 per cent on the amount of stock paid in and was in its own building erected on the east side of New Jersey Avenue, between B and C streets, S. E.[1]

The following spring the bank had a charter from congress, and a few weeks later received, together with the Bank of Alexandria, deposits of public money in place of the late Branch Bank.[2]

The Bank of Columbia was apparently used as the medium for public payments as well as a depository, as a branch was opened in the treasury office.[3] But the mania for starting banks, so prevalent at that period throughout the country, was not satisfied in the District by the six charters granted by congress, for after all, the net gain in numbers was only two, and both were located in Alexandria. At once proposals were made for organizing new banks, for as the author of a newspaper communication stated the city's "only little bank of Capitol Hill has not had funds sufficient for the canals, road stock, and building houses in the neighborhood of its owner's houses. . . . In short, the people are distressed for want of reasonable bank accommodation, and the commerce of the Potomac is nearly at a stand." [4] In the meantime the office of the old branch bank at the northeast corner of 13th and F streets was offered for sale,[5] and as the assets of that institution were more than sufficient to liquidate the stock, besides a record for good yearly dividends, the appeal for subscriptions to bank stock with such a precedent was not only to those in need of working capital but also to the investor. The president of the Branch Bank, John P. Van Ness, took an active interest in one

[1] Deed of Daniel Carroll of Duddington to Bank of Washington, July 25, 1810, of lots 7 and 8 in subdivision of lot 4, Square 690, for $1863. Dividend notice, *Intelligencer*, Oct. 31, 1810.

[2] Report of Albert Gallatin. Annals of Congress, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., Jan. 13, 1812, p. 2056.

[3] *Intelligencer*, March 24, 1812. Also called the office of the Bank of Columbia, city of Washington. *Intelligencer*, April 2, 1812.

[4] The same, March 24, 1812.

[5] The same, May 28, 1812.

of these enterprises which developed into the Bank of the Metropolis. The stock was nearly twice over subscribed on the first day the public was given a chance to subscribe.[1] An association or partnership was formed, with John P. Van Ness as president. On a similar plan the Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Georgetown was organized,[2] and applications in both instances were made to congress the following fall for a charter, the same request having come from the Farmers and Mechanics Bank and the Union Bank of Alexandria. But no action was reached by that body until some three years later. But during that interval the new banks continued to do business as private banks. In the spring of 1814 the Bank of the Metropolis was open for business on the second floor of the building at the northeast corner of 15th and F streets, which was purchased by the bank and where it remained until the banking room on the first floor had been fitted up.[3] During the year 1814 it was proposed in the discussions in congress to replace the Bank of the United States by a national bank to be located in Washington. But the currency condition had not reached the height of the destined disorder, and two years passed before any action was taken, and then a new charter was given to the Bank of the United States and the principal office, as in the case of the first institution, was placed in Philadelphia. The net result of these efforts to enlarge the banking facilities of the District was that by 1814 the number of banks both chartered and private had increased from seven in 1809 to ten. Of this latter number, six were located in Alexandria, two in Georgetown and two in Washington. A third was added to the latter number in the following year, when the Patriotic Bank, Robert Brent, president, was organized.[4] Beyond an amendment offered in the house to the

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 4, 1814.

[2] Same, Jan. 14, 1814.

[3] Same, April 12, 1814. The force employed is given in a notice in the issue of March 19, 1814, when it is stated the board of directors "will elect a teller, a bookkeeper, discount clerk who will do the duty also of runner for the present, so far as to prepare the notices for notes falling due, and a porter who will also serve the notices."

[4] The same, April 25 and June 25, 1815. According to a report of the

bill incorporating the Bank of Alexandria proposing a tax of 1 per cent on the capital stock to be paid to the corporation of Alexandria for the support of free schools, and which was defeated by a vote of four to one, nothing was done in congress to raise from this source money for local public purposes.

The wonderful change in transportation methods wrought by steam had its beginnings in the application of that power to vessels. Some six years after the successful trip of the *Clermont*, the steamboat made its appearance on the Potomac. In the year 1813 there were no steamboats south of Philadelphia, except "a clumsy, flat-bottomed steamboat called the *Columbian*, had been used on the Potomac to carry grain and wood to Washington." [1] In the fall of 1812, B. H. Latrobe, who had just completed his first term of service as architect of the public buildings, sought to interest Washington citizens in the formation of a company to operate a steamboat between Georgetown and Alexandria.[2]

This plan was soon changed for the more ambitious one of a route between Washington and Acquia Creek, forty miles down the river.[3] It was decided to form a Virginia corporation. At a meeting held in Alexandria it was voted to make an application to the Virginia legislature for a charter. Early in 1813 the Potomac Steamboat Co. was organized, and by June its

secretary of the treasury to the house, Feb. 22, 1814, the capital actually paid in of the chartered banks of the District was as follows: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Bank of Washington | $546,665 |
| Bank of Columbia | 859,560 |
| Union Bank of Georgetown | 405,170 |
| Bank of Alexandria | 480,000 |
| Bank of Potomac | 500,000 |
| Farmers Bank of Alexandria | 510,000 |
| Mechanics Bank of Alexandria | 270,460 |

[1] McMaster, Vol. 4, p. 401.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 3, 1813. Mr. Latrobe signed the call for the meeting as agent for Messrs. Livingston and Fulton, the owners of the patent, and who at that time held the monopoly.

[3] Potomac Creek, four miles south of Acquia Creek, was first proposed as being nearer Fredericksburg, as the design was to make a connection with the southern line of stages that passed through that town. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 15, 1812.

boat, the *Washington*, was launched at the ship yard in New York.[1] But two years passed before the boat was brought to the Potomac. By its trip from New York the first demonstration was given of the ability of steam to cope with the might of the ocean. But the *Washington*, as the first vessel of that description having "tried the sea," [2] not only brought assurance to doubting minds as to its seaworthiness, but was the wonder of the day as an annihilator of space in having made the trip in fifty hours. The first week in June the *Washington* began daily trips to Acquia Creek, touching at Georgetown, the bridge at Washington and at Alexandria.[3] In a few days the schedule was changed to a trip every other day, so as to suit apparently the stage time-table. The passengers then left Washington in the afternoon, and the return trip was made so the boat reached the capital city early the next morning, where stages met it at the bridge and conveyed passengers to McKeowin's Hotel, as the Indian Queen Hotel was at that time named, where the stages for Baltimore stopped.

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 16, 1813.

[2] The same, May 29, 1815.

[3] The same, June 6 and 8 and 26, 1815. The boat left Washington at 4 A.M., arriving at Acquia Creek at 12 M., or half the time of the stage route. The fare for each passenger was $5, including one meal.

# CHAPTER XX

## MEASURES OF POOR RELIEF

THE cost of the care of the poor next to the amounts spent on the streets was the largest item in the early years in the annual city budget.[1] As far as can be judged from the more meagre records of Alexandria and the levy court of Washington County, neither was obliged to provide for such a large number of dependents as Washington.[2] While the general condition of the larger population of Washington was not as prosperous as that of the other two towns, especially Alexandria, owing mainly perhaps to the smaller volume of business, yet undoubtedly the burden of the poor was increased in the capital city, because it was the national centre. For then as now people came to Washington with hopes of collecting claims against the government, of getting a pension or perhaps an office, and then there was a class who had no very definite object.

Delays, disappointments and failure were the fate of many, and so with resources exhausted they were thrown into the

[1] City finance reports. *Intelligencer*, May 29, 1805, June 2, 1806, May 29, 1807.

[2] The Alexandria corporation authorized the establishment of a poorhouse and a workhouse combined, by ordinance of Feb. 5, 1800, and five years later erected a new building which stood on a tract of ten acres near the then bounds of the town. As the function imposed by the old Maryland County laws on the levy court to care for the poor was continued in operation in the County of Washington except within the corporate limits of the city of Washington, the corporation of Georgetown made no provision for this class until after the enactment by congress of the law of May 20, 1826, which deprived the court of the power to lay a tax in Georgetown and also relieved it of the care of the Georgetown poor. By an ordinance of Nov. 3, 1810, provision was made by the Georgetown corporation for renting a house for keeping in custody and setting to work vagrants; in other words, a workhouse.

debtors' prison or became dependent. The city government had hardly been in existence four years when, in the course of a report to the common council, it was stated "we cannot comfortably or economically provide for our own numerous poor or furnish the alternative of work or expulsion from our streets to the straggling vagabond beggars, which the seat of government draws together, and who are as much a pest to the members of the national legislature as a nuisance to the resident inhabitants." [1] As early as 1807 it was estimated that "there are annually four or five hundred persons whom their affairs bring to the seat of government during the sittings of the national legislature . . . besides these idle and dissolute persons." [2] An appropriation for the relief of the poor was made by the first city council and was continued each year, but with such a rapid rate of increase that in the course of four years the decision was reached to build a poorhouse, not only where the poor and infirm could be cared for, but also where employment could be given to those able to work, and in this way they could contribute to their support.[3] Prior to this time the contract system had been in operation, the city paying for the board and lodging of dependents as well as for the services of a contract physician and, in case of death, paying for the burial. But in the event arrangements could not be made in this way for their maintenance, then they were sent to the poorhouse, which was maintained by the levy court for the County of Washington except the portion within the limits of Washington, in the frame building erected on Judiciary Square by the city commissioners as a hospital for laborers and purchased by the levy court in 1801.[4] A year before a decision was reached to buy ground and erect a poorhouse, the city council directed a memorial to be prepared, asking congress to grant a lease, not

[1] Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 1, Aug. 25, 1806.

[2] Latrobe's report. American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 483.

[3] City Ordinance, Oct. 31, 1806.

[4] The same, Oct. 28, 1802. The use of this building as a county poorhouse was continued for a number of years. Notice of its being for sale. *Intelligencer*, June 6, 1815.

a gift, of public lots or ground for this purpose.[1] This request was not granted. Some four years later the corporation bought an entire square, where a poorhouse was erected.[2] So great was the need in the winter of 1804–1805, in spite of current appropriations for poor relief, more than double what had been provided in any previous year, that a public meeting was called of citizens living in the most populous part of the city, namely, west of the capitol, to devise means of meeting the pressing emergency. A committee was authorized to canvass the city and solicit money.[3] In addition to money distributed by the committee to those applying for relief the public was informed that clothing could be used.[4] This method of supplementing the funds for corporate poor relief was continued from time to time, through the years down to such a recent period as the organization of the Associated Charities. At intervals organizations were formed that sought by public appeal and by entertainments to secure the means to supply the demands which knocked at every door.[5]

What was apparently the initial performance of one of these organizations — the Washington Thespian Benevolent Society — displayed more zeal on the part of the performers to do a

[1] Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 1, Oct. 23, 1805.

[2] Square No. 448, bounded by M, N, 6th and 7th streets, N. W. City Ordinance, May 23, 1809.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 21 and 23, 1805. In the issue of February 22, the report of the committee shows receipts of $445, of which sum $93 was contributed by members of the senate, $92 by members of the house and $260 by citizens. A further report in the issue of March 22 gives the total expenditures as $531.98.

[4] Same, Jan. 25, 1805.

[5] The earliest organization to raise money for charity was the Washington Humane Society, composed entirely of young men with directors representing the several wards. Joseph Gales, Jr., one of the proprietors of the *Intelligencer*, was the president. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 20 and 29, 1810. Two years later the Washington Benevolent Society was formed, with Judge Cranch, president. *Intelligencer*, Feb. 4, 1812. Notice of an exhibition, presumably theatrical, for the benefit of the poor under the auspices of this society, Jan. 25, 1815. A theatrical society called the Thespian furnished the entertainment the following winter, and it was stated "that a similar association last year gave to the poor upwards of $1000." Oct. 13, 1815.

charitable act than ability in the histrionic art, for in a newspaper communication commenting on the production, the writer suggested that more attention be paid to stage business, "for," he adds, "however our feelings may be wrought up in the contemplation of a fellow-creature in the act of committing suicide, much of the trembling interest with which we view this wretched being is destroyed by the knowledge that he is altogether unprovided with any weapon to accomplish his self-destruction."[1] In addition to other forms of appeal, charity sermons were delivered in the churches.[2] Finally, in the winter of 1815–1816, a more permanent use of a portion of the money thus obtained from the charitable was proposed when it was announced that a part of the proceeds of a theatrical entertainment for charity would be given to the Washington City Orphan Asylum, then being organized.[3] The Female Benevolent Society of Georgetown aimed to improve the condition of the poor as well as to relieve their current necessities.[4] Women were given spinning and weaving to do, and wheels and reels and cards were lent out by the society, which was also an agency for the sale of the manufactured articles. Clothing was supplied girls so that they could attend school, while provisions and clothing were given to those unable to help themselves. Still more distinctive, because unusual in the average city of that day, of another phase of Washington as a national

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 3, 1816.

[2] Notice of a charity sermon to be delivered in the Methodist Church, Georgetown. *Intelligencer*, Feb. 15, 1812. Also in a previous issue such a sermon was announced to be given at St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 13, 1815. Notice of a meeting of ladies in the hall of the house at the capitol for the purpose of joining an association to provide an asylum for destitute orphans. Same, Oct. 3 and Nov. 27, 1815. Mrs. James Madison served as first directress for two years and was followed by Mrs. John P. Van Ness. Historical Sketch, 55th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. 185, July 21, 1897.

[4] *Federal Republican*, Jan. 11, 1813. Annual report of board of directors. Mrs. T. Peter, directress; Mrs. Mason, treasurer; Mrs. Heugh, secretary; managers, Mrs. Addison, Mrs. Woodside, Mrs. Bussard, Mrs. Lingan, Mrs. English, Miss Dick, Miss Worthington, Miss E. Peter.

centre was the early provision for the care and maintenance of lunatics.[1] Apparently this service was done by contract, and that method was continued for a number of years.

As the city made use of the poorhouse of the county, so early a similar plan was adopted to supply the lack of a city jail or lockup by paying the expense of keeping at the levy court jail persons committed by the magistrates.[2] There is no further reference to the subject and no indication as to how long the arrangement was continued, if finally made. It may be concluded the county did not maintain a jail very long in the city, for five years later the Georgetown corporation gave permission to the levy court to use the jail of that town,[3] while within two years from that time congress granted permission to have committed to the circuit court jail all police cases coming within the jurisdiction of justices of the peace.[4] The circuit court jail or jail of Washington County was built in the year 1802, with money appropriated by congress and expended under the direction of the United States marshal of the District.[5]

As the result of the expenditure of $11,702 in 1802 and 1803, a building was erected of brick in Judiciary Square about midway on the north side of the line of E Street, two stories high, one hundred feet long and twenty-one feet wide.[6]

Through the centre of the interior on both floors from end to end ran a passageway, on each side of which were eight cells, each eight feet square.[7] At the same time no provision was made for erecting a jail for Alexandria County, although the structure in Alexandria leased for that purpose was described some seven years later as not fit to house swine, and in addition

[1] The first provision of the sort was made by the city ordinance of Nov. 26, 1806.

[2] Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 1, Nov. 2, 1805.

[3] Georgetown Ordinance, Nov. 3, 1810.

[4] Act to further amend the charter of the city of Washington, May 4, 1812.

[5] American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 1, p. 338. Report of the marshal, Daniel C. Brent, and also of George Hadfield, architect of the building.

[6] Warden, p. 36.

[7] Register of Debates. 19th Cong., 1st Sess., March 1, 1826, p. 1475.

was insecure.[1] No attention was paid by congress to appeals for a better building, and in fact it was not until some six or eight years later that any action was taken by the national legislature, and then, instead of treating the two counties alike, congress merely conferred on the levy court of Alexandria County authority to impose a tax to defray the cost of erecting a jail and a court house.[2] It is not surprising, as the editor of the *Alexandria Daily Gazette* stated,[3] that the people felt that congress either could not or would not attend to their needs, and as there was no other legislative source from which relief could come, the conclusion was reached that a territorial form of government providing a legislature that would be more sensitive to the wants of the people would correct what was looked upon as a vital defect in the system of government.[4] At any rate, the discrimination against the Virginia portion of the District displayed in this connection, with other causes of dissatisfaction with congressional government soon provided a fruitful soil for the seeds of discontent which came to a fruitage in the retrocession of the entire section in 1846.

As illustrating another phase in the relations of congress and the District, a couple of years prior to this complaint of the Alexandria editor, the house had added to the list of standing committees one on the District of Columbia. At its head was placed Philip Barton Key, representing the district comprising Montgomery and Frederick counties, Md., who was the only member of either branch of congress then, and for a number of years later, who owned the house he occupied in the District.[5]

[1] *Alexandria Daily Gazette*, reprinted in the *Intelligencer*, Nov. 24, 1810.

[2] United States Laws, April 27, 1816, and April 3, 1818.

[3] Nov. 24, 1810.

[4] As to the remedy, the editor apparently stood alone, for in the following January, a resolution offered in the house to instruct a committee to inquire into the expediency of establishing a government failed of action, and it was then stated by Mr. Lewis of Virginia that he had heard of no application from any part of the District for such a change. Annals of Congress, 11th Cong., 3d Sess., p. 626, Jan. 18, 1811.

[5] Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 1st Sess., Jan. 21, 1808, pp. 1486 and 1512.

But hardly a year elapsed before the house was informed that there was no room in the new south wing "sufficiently spacious for the increasing business," of the committee. As a temporary expedient the sittings of the committee were held in the room fitted up for the use of the president when he came to the capitol.[1] Up to the year 1812 commitments to the new jail of Washington County were restricted to those sentenced by the circuit court. The jurisdiction of the court was broad, but it did not invade the province of the justices of the peace or magistrates as constituted under the Maryland law. The magistrates were the police court judges of the day, but in addition to giving judgment in cases of disorder or vagrancy or violations of city ordinances, they had also cognizance in personal demands or small debts to the value of $20. When the political area of the city was carved out of Washington County by the law of 1802, the separation between the newly created municipality and that of the county was only partial. The levy court of Washington County still retained its function of levying taxes within the city as it did in Georgetown, and for two years after the incorporation of the city, the tax collector of the county, who had also been made the tax collector of the city, performed his dual function and assessed the real and personal property in the city and collected the taxes both for the municipality and the county.[2] Congress in 1804 made an exception in the case of Washington by putting an end to the power of the levy court to levy any tax on the inhabitants of the city[3] but some eight years later substituted a species of indirect tax, by directing that the city should pay one half of the general county

[1] Message from the president of the United States, transmitting a report of the surveyor of the public buildings. Dec. 21, 1809.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 17, 1804. List of property advertised by Washington Boyd, collector of the county tax for the county of Washington, including pieces in the city.

[3] Congress was promptly informed by the county authorities that the loss of the contribution of the city towards county expenses was a great inconvenience. (Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 536, 1805–1806.) But at the same session (p. 532) the protest took another form in a petition from the inhabitants of the county asking that that section of the District be receded to Maryland.

expenses except for roads and bridges.[1] The law also provided for the representation of the various parts of the county, expressly excluding Washington city, by directing that the president should appoint seven justices, three residents of Georgetown, two living east of Rock Creek and two west of that stream.

Not until the passage of the law of May 20, 1826, were the relations of Georgetown to the levy court made the same as those of Washington. Up to that time Georgetown lay within the taxing area of the court.

It was at the same session that congress conferred on the city government specific police power in place of the more general authority of previous laws to preserve the peace and quiet of the city.[2] In addition the marshal of the District was directed to receive into the jail all persons committed by justices of the peace, as vagrants and for disorder, etc. The expense of maintaining the prisoners, the marshal was instructed, was to be defrayed by the city authorities. It was further provided that the use of the jail should continue until other arrangements be made by the corporation. The elaborateness of the law relative to suppressing vagrancy and disorder in the city finds its explanation in part no doubt in the growing population figures. Washington had emerged from its earlier village conditions, as the result of an average yearly growth since 1800 of about 500 souls, a ratio of increase that did not change much until after 1840. But this legislation also marks the beginning, not only in Washington but in the other two towns, of a period of stringent local ordinances designed to control as well as to restrict the growing class of free negroes which was regarded as a menace to the peace and security of slave-

[1] United States Law, July 1, 1812. A similar provision was inserted in the city charter of May 15, 1820, but was more specific in character, as the city was then required to pay "one-half of the expenses incurred on account of the orphan's court, the office of coroner, the jail of said county" and for roads east of Rock Creek leading directly to the city. See also Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 4, March 15, 1817.

[2] An act further to amend the charter of the city of Washington, May 4, 1812.

holding communities.[1] In the earlier years, when the city was smaller and the black terror not so real, peace officers were not provided, and it may be presumed were not needed. It is true that as early as 1803, the office of superintendent of police was created and two years later the title was changed to high constable and still later this office was superseded by a board of commissioners.[2] The function of the office, however, was to look after the health of the city where "bilious affections prevailed in autumnal months" and where alarm had recently been caused by the ravages of yellow fever in Alexandria.[3] The duties of the police officers, as they were termed, were to inspect the city and see that stagnant water and other nuisances were abated. In the later stage of the evolution, the board of commissioners had general charge of the execution of the laws, the supervision of improvements and of the constables. While, of course, such officers had the responsibility of maintaining the peace of the city, yet that was not the primary function.

It was not until some six years after the incorporation of the city that the duty was made more distinctive, to preserve the peace and good order of the city and especially to enforce the law forbidding slaves or free colored to be abroad after ten o'clock at night.[4] Two police officers were appointed, one in each of the two sections of the city east and west of 4th Street W., who served during the day. There was no provision for a night watch.[5]

[1] In Washington alone the percentage of free colored to the whites had risen from 4 per cent in 1800 to 14 per cent ten years later. The proportion of slaves to whites for the same period showed a slight decrease. In Maryland from 1810 "the progress of emancipation was astonishing. The state became crowded with a free black population." Speech of Clement Dorsey, of Maryland, in the house. Register of Debates. 19th Cong., 2d Sess., Dec. 27, 1826, p. 560.

[2] City Ordinances, Sept. 20, 1803, May 2, 1805, and May 30, 1807.

[3] *Intelligencer*, May 28, 1804. The city council appropriated $300 for the relief of such citizens of Alexandria as sought refuge in Washington.

[4] City Ordinance, Dec. 6, 1808.

[5] In Alexandria a night watch was established as early as 1800 (Ordinances of Feb. 5, 1800, and March 30, 1801). The watchmen were required to cry the time at the beginning of each hour. In each dis-

In the course of three years another change was made. The title police was dropped and the old term constable revived.[1] It is evident the right to use the circuit court jail, provided the city paid the charges, conferred on the magistrates, was not made use of, or at least to the full extent. For more than a year afterwards, the complaint was publicly made that magistrates set free disorderly persons, vagrants and more especially free negroes, it being alleged there was no place to send them.[2] As has already been pointed out a place had been provided, but apparently the cost stood in the way.

The writer of the newspaper communication referred to severely arraigned the city fathers for their neglect of the interests of the community in the treatment of petty offenders. The previous council had awakened to some phases of the situation, as an appropriation was made for the erection of a watch house in each ward, the first provision of the sort made by the city government.[3] But this was not enough. The problem of dealing with vagrants and disorderly persons at that period was apparently trifling as compared with the more serious questions arising from the increase in the number of free negroes. At the following session an act was passed dealing specifically with this subject, but the penalties were limited to fines or imprisonment.[4]

The old method of arresting, and then turning loose again on the streets, vagrants and disorderly persons was to be given up. A workhouse was established.[5] A modest beginning was made. A house located at Greenleaf's Point was rented and there negroes, free mulattoes and vagrants were set to work making

trict was a watch box with a lantern attached. There was no provision for a night watch in Georgetown until 1811, when a captain and seven officers were appointed. At this time an appropriation was made for the erection of watch houses in that town.

[1] City Ordinance, May 31, 1811.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 4, 1813.

[3] City Ordinance, March 30, 1813.

[4] The same, Dec. 16, 1812. Ordinances similar in purpose were passed about this period by the councils of the other two towns.

[5] City Ordinance, Nov. 15, 1813. Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 4, Feb. 12, 1814. *Intelligencer*, Jan. 10, 1814.

such goods as could be sold, thus reducing the cost to the city of their support.[1] In the course of a couple of years the workhouse as a separate institution was abandoned and it was combined with the poorhouse, a union which was continued up to a few years ago.[2] The purpose, however, at the time was to keep the workhouse apart from the poorhouse, as the year following its establishment a resolution was passed by the council and approved by the president of the United States, authorizing a lottery to provide a building fund for a workhouse or penitentiary. But while a series of lotteries was held, the city realized nothing for such a purpose.[3] In the year 1812 the council, availing itself of the clause in the city charter, granted that year to hold lotteries for effecting objects of public improvement, secured the approval of the president of the United States for a lottery to build two Lancaster schoolhouses. As there was no limit to the number of lotteries, except the provision that not more than $10,000 could be raised in one year, the city council the next year provided in the same fashion for a workhouse, and at the next session a similar provision was made for a city hall. For five years following, the council annually passed a lottery resolution, so that altogether there were eight, which were expected to net the city $80,000. But the enterprises dragged from the outset. Five years passed after the first lottery ordinance before a drawing was held.[4] Eventually, a school fund was the only one secured, while the city was plunged heavily in debt to pay the prizes for which the absconding manager left no money. A few months before the circuit court

[1] An instance of the odd blending of two separate governing bodies, such as the city council of Washington and the levy court of the county, is to be found in the law of congress of July 1, 1812, conferring certain powers on the latter, which authorized the court to establish and maintain a penitentiary, as a workhouse was often termed at that period "in such place as the mayor, aldermen and common council of the city of Washington shall designate." It is not known that this provision was carried out.

[2] City Ordinance, April 6, 1815.

[3] City Council Resolution, Aug. 3, 1814.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 28, 1818. Report on lotteries in the District, American State Papers, Miscella., Vol. 2, p. 634.

jail was ready for service, occurred the first punishment for a capital crime that had been imposed within the District. James McGurk, who had been found guilty of the murder of his wife, had been sentenced to be executed on the 28th of August, 1802, but had been reprieved for a couple of months by the president of the United States through the efforts of his counsel, A. B. Woodward.[1] At the end of that period he was taken from the C Street jail to a gallows which, according to tradition, was erected on the mall at Maryland Avenue and 1st Street, N. W., where he was hung.[2] The body was buried in Holmead Cemetery and near that of the daughter of a poor but respectable widow. This action on the part of those interested in McGurk was resented by the mother of the girl, and some of her friends removed the body of the homicide to the Slashes. When this became known, the body was recovered and placed in the original grave. It was not, however, allowed to remain there and was again disinterred and taken back to the Slashes, which proved to be the final resting place.[3] The account of the execution of McGurk in the *Intelligencer* the day following that event was as follows: "Yesterday was executed James McGurk, sentenced to death for murdering his wife," which illustrates the change in methods of treating news matter by the public press. In this instance, as with other items of local happenings, the details were no doubt known to all members of that small community, so that in reality they did not constitute news. This was the view expressed by the editor of the *Intelligencer* in the course of an explanation for not printing communications detailing the personal merits of candidates for the office of mayor when he wrote, "We all know each other in the city and the topic is one very uninteresting to those who do not belong to it."[4] Equal brevity was used eleven years later in reporting the next occurrence of the kind.[5] In commenting on the rarity of execu-

[1] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 30 and Sept. 6, 1802.

[2] C. C. Reports, Cranch, Vol. 1, p. 71. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 29, 1802.

[3] Reminiscences of George Watterston. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 29, 1845.

[4] June 2, 1815.

[5] At that time a negro slave named Patrick, convicted of an attempt to commit rape, was hung on a gallows erected near the jail. *Intelli-*

tions in the District apropos of the 1813 murder case, the editor of the *Intelligencer* attributed it to the leniency in the execution of the law and the frequency of pardons so "as to rob the law of half its terrors." There is no indication of leniency in the enforcement of the laws allowing imprisonment for debt. For as small an amount as one dollar, the unfortunate debtor could be shut up in jail for fifty or sixty days.[1] The state of public opinion in this particular may no doubt be accurately gauged and the early stage in the movement, which finally wiped from the statute books of the states what came to be regarded as barbarous legislation, may be traced in its labored course in the law enacted at the second session of congress in the new city. Then the rigors of the Maryland laws, adopted as they had been in bulk, were mitigated, when imprisonment for debts less than $20 was forbidden. Five years, however, had hardly passed when the law was repealed.[2] There was no place but the prison, in the estimate of that age, for the penniless debtor, but for the debtor with property the doors were flung open, provided he would give up what he had for the benefit of his creditors. The process for the insolvent debtor in Maryland was to appeal to the legislature and secure an enabling act to enjoy the benefits of the insolvency laws. But as there was no such authority in the District to appeal to except congress, that body passed an insolvent debtor's law at the third session in the city which clothed the circuit court with the authority exercised in such cases by the Maryland legislature. The procedure was then similar to that in Maryland, and congress attempted no higher level.

The action of congress in going back to the former harshness of the law and making imprisonment for small debts legal in the District was no doubt a response, in part at least, to a protest of the grand jury of Washington County, which characterized

*gencer*, March 13, 1813. Cranch, C. C., Vol. 2, p. 60. Five years passed before a capital sentence was again imposed in the District (Cranch, C. C., Vol. 2, p. 158), but there is no record that the sentence was executed.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 2, 1818.

[2] Stats., Vol. 2, p. 422, Feb. 24, 1807.

"the law prohibiting imprisonment for debts less than $20 as in favor of the idle and vagabond, to encourage dishonesty and to shake the confidence of citizens." [1] It is quite evident this view of the justice of such laws was generally held throughout the District, for two years previously a convention composed of delegates representing the three towns and the two counties refused to adopt a resolution favoring the repeal of the law.[2] This condition of the laws in the District continued unchanged for many years.

Some time in the year 1802 the coils of debt had so tightened about Samuel Blodgett, that picturesque figure in the group of early city speculators, that he was unable with all his ingenuity to extricate himself. He was thrown into prison. Owing to the kindly offices of his friend, Dr. William Thornton, who became responsible for his respecting the prison bounds by giving a bond of $10,000, he was able to enjoy as the act of congress in providing the bounds specified "the liberty to walk therein, out of the prison, for the preservation of his health." But he extended his walk beyond the limits and failed to return, and Dr. Thornton, whose versatility did not successfully include money matters, managed in some way to make good his surety.[3] But this proved to be only an incident in the varied career of Mr. Blodgett. He soon reappeared again in Washington and busied himself in soliciting funds for the national university and later on he started a popular subscription for a monument to General Washington.[4] It was even said that while still in

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 18, 1807.

[2] Proceedings of delegates representing various sections of the District, n. p. n. d. (1805).

[3] Statement of Dr. William Thornton, dated April 10, 1824. Force Papers, Library of Congress. Also records of the circuit court, December term, 1803, for proceedings to recover under the bond. It appears from the court record that John Stinckney, a nephew of Blodgett joined with Dr. Thornton as surety, but there is no mention in Dr. Thornton's statement of Mr. Stinckney sharing in this liability.

[4] In the winter of 1805–1806 he presented a memorial to congress stating that subscriptions for the university have been received equal to $30,000 from 18,000 subscribers, and requesting that a site be designated and such other aid given as may be deemed proper. Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 301.

the prison bounds he continued his solicitation of five-dollar subscriptions for the university.[1] As the years went on, inquiry began to be made as to the progress by Mr. Blodgett, and communications in the *Intelligencer* called for a statement.[2] Through the same medium he was asked for a report in regard to the fund raised for the monument to Washington.[3] While as far as known no report was made by Mr. Blodgett at the time, yet some years after his death, it was stated the university fund collected by him amounted to $7000, which at that time had nearly doubled by the accumulation of interest.[4] There is no record left of this fund or indeed of the other Blodgett fund for the Washington monument, the whereabouts of which, years later, was the subject of inquiry by a correspondent in the *Intelligencer* who declared it had been deposited in the Bank of the United States.[5] In the midst of the vicissitudes of his closing years, as no doubt they were, even to a man of his sanguine temperament, Mr. Blodgett published his second work on political economy, which, however, was not strictly confined to that subject, but included personal reminiscences and more especially his connection with the national university enterprise.[6] He died in the year 1814 in a hospital in Baltimore and so completely had he dropped out of current interests that no notice appeared in the Washington press of his death.[7] Although Mr. Blodgett was dead, his widow was not, as the holders of the large property interests which were sold to make good the first prize in the unfortunate hotel lottery

[1] Journal of Latrobe, p. 132. Latrobe gives what is no doubt one of the current estimates of Blodgett, when he speaks of him as "one of the adventurers and swindlers whom the establishment of the city brought hither."

[2] *Intelligencer*, May 9 and July 13, 1811.

[3] The same, Jan. 14, 1812.

[4] The same, March 31, 1819. The author of this communication proposed that the "Brick Capitol," then recently vacated by congress, be used as "a seminary which will be the foundation of the national university." March 31, 1819.

[5] The same, Oct. 8, 1833.

[6] Economica. 1806.

[7] Dr. Thornton's statement, Force Papers. Cranch, C. C., 3, p. 394. Death of Samuel Blodgett in 1814 admitted.

soon discovered. For Mr. Blodgett had failed to join his wife in the deed by which he vested in trustees all his property to secure the first lottery prize. Hardly a year elapsed after his death, when a notice appeared signed by Elias B. Caldwell, attorney for Mrs. Blodgett, informing the owners of the Blodgett property that all of it was liable to the claim of dower.[1] It is pleasant to turn from these aspects of Mr. Blodgett's career and get a glimpse of him from another point of view. When a young man, Joseph H. Bradley, a prominent member of the District bar, was a companion of Mr. Blodgett on some of his hunting trips. He was "a capital shot," Mr. Bradley states, "keeping the best dogs I have ever seen, a keen sportsman and sketching with great skill. There is in my father's family a lifelike sketch made by him of his two dogs in the act of pointing. . . . He shot the birds in what was then marshy ground between 11th and 14th and K and H streets."[2] Of quite a different type was Benjamin Stoddert, who died a short time before Mr. Blodgett closed his varied career. Both men had ventured largely in Washington city property and both had wrecked their fortunes. Mr. Stoddert, who had a respectable career as a public man and in business, ended it deeply in debt.[3] Five years previously General Uriah Forrest, whose gallant record in the revolutionary war had been followed by large business operations in Georgetown and who was one of General Washington's close advisers in his negotiations to secure the site of the city, had passed away. He had served as the first clerk of the circuit court for four years and was then succeeded by William Brent, who held the office for thirty-eight years.[4] He was one of the original proprietors of land within the city, but when he died in 1809 his estate was in the hands of assignees.[5] It is by

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 6, 1815. The United States having bought the hotel property for the use of the post office department settled Mrs. Blodgett's claim by paying her yearly $333.33 for her natural life. United States Law, May 19, 1828.

[2] The same, Dec. 15, 1852.

[3] The same, Jan. 1, 1814.

[4] The same, July 17, 1805.

[5] The same, May 1, 1809.

no means clear that the financial failures in these three lives are entirely attributable to their losses as owners of Washington city property, for while there was a great shrinkage in property values in the city, yet all owners were not ruined. Instances of the more fortunate class are to be found in the estate of David Burnes, represented by General John P. Van Ness, the estate of Notley Young, represented by Robert Brent and also in the estate of Daniel Carroll of Duddington, who at this time was one of the moneyed men of the place, although in later years he met reverses. Then he was president of the Washington Bridge Co., of the Columbian Turnpikes Co. and of the Bank of Washington.

It was not until later years that Thomas Law felt the pinch of narrower circumstances, although his friend William M. Duncanson had lost practically all the money he invested in the city. James Greenleaf was reduced to moderate circumstances but managed to get an income from his claims on the property of the famous but disastrous syndicate of Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf. His brother-in-law, William Cranch, at the beginning the Washington agent of the syndicate, lived a long, honored and useful life as chief justice of the circuit court.

The lack of compactness in the location of the buildings of the city was not without an advantage, for no doubt it was mainly due to this condition that so few fires occurred during the early years. It seems remarkable in a place where wooden construction was largely the rule, but it is recorded that during one period of ten years ending in 1816 there had not been a single loss of property from such a cause.[1]

In the year 1802, when the city government was established, there was but one fire engine in the city and that belonged to the government and was used in extinguishing the flames that were discovered in the treasury office in January, 1801. At the very first session of the city council provision was made for fire protection which was ample enough, but like some other projects of the city fathers in the early days was beyond the

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 9, 1816.

resources of the city government. The clause of the law that was not practicable gave instructions to the mayor to buy a fire engine to be kept near the Centre Market and also to get two additional engines to be located near the west and east markets.

In the other sections requiring citizens to provide at their own expense leather buckets to be kept in their houses or stores, one bucket for each story, ready for use should the occasion arise, the council followed the example of Alexandria, but did not attempt to appeal to the reason of their constituents as the city authorities on the west side of the Potomac did in the quaintly worded preamble to the ordinance of Feb. 5, 1800, requiring citizens to provide fire buckets. For it was stated that "whereas it is the duty and interest of the inhabitants to guard against the destructive ravages of fire and it is reasonable that the expenses incurred should be borne by those whose property is protected, etc." In Georgetown, the same year, the Washington ordinance was passed, the town authorities assumed charge of the engine that had been bought by subscriptions of citizens, and two years later fell in line with the other two towns by requiring property owners to provide fire buckets.

The second council of Washington evidently recognized the futility of the ordinance for the purchase of engines, but with the view of having this done at private expense divided the city into four fire wards which were not identical with the city wards, and authorized citizens to organize a fire company in each ward. The plan seemed to appeal to the public, for in a few weeks companies were organized in all the wards.[1] The names of fire directors, one for each ward, appeared in the list of city officials for the year 1803–1804 and several years following, showing that this part of the ordinance was carried out. In addition the board of general superintendence or fire commissioners, composed of the directors and representatives from each company, was called together for purposes of organization.[2] It was evidently early realized that the city corporation was unable to

[1] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 17 and 22, Sept. 21 and Dec. 19, 1804.

[2] The same, June 4, 1806.

provide a fire protection system as contemplated, as in fact it did not do until a decade later, and so a memorial was sent to congress asking that fire companies be established, and fire engines, houses and ladders be provided at public expense for the mutual protection of the property of the United States and citizens.[1] Congress made no direct response to this appeal. But the engine belonging to the government, with the building near the treasury office, was turned over to the Union Fire Co.[2] It is probable this is the engine referred to in the *Intelligencer* of June 27, 1810, as the only one in the city that could be brought into service. A year before, however, a committee of the Columbian Fire Engine Co., later on Columbia, had been appointed to make a contract for the purchase of a fire engine.[3] At that time it was stated the company had raised nearly enough to meet the cost, and two years later the balance was appropriated from the city funds, the first municipal expenditure for fire protection. The headquarters of the company were in the vicinity of the capitol building. It thus appears that by the year 1811 there were two fire engines in the city, one in the vicinity of the treasury office and the other in the vicinity of the capitol, neither of which were owned by the city.

Before the close of the year 1814 an engine had been purchased entirely by city funds and placed in an engine house erected near the Centre Market with money from the same source.[4] The fire companies were composed of volunteers, but after the engine was brought to the scene of the fire, the help of citizens generally was relied upon to man the lines that were formed from the only water supply, the wells or springs or streams, and along which the buckets were passed to the engine. It was felt to be a public duty to give assistance at such a time, and the names of leading citizens are to be found enrolled as members of the

[1] Jour. Com. Coun., Vol. 1, Oct. 23, 1805.

[2] *Intelligencer*, June 6, 1812. Notice of a meeting of the company in the engine house south of the treasury office, while in the issue of the 13th the location is given as north of that building.

[3] The same, March 11, 1809.

[4] City Ordinance, Nov. 15, 1813. *Intelligencer*, Feb. 18 and Dec. 30, 1814. In later years the company bore the name of Perseverance.

companies and also recorded as helping to pass buckets. It is not uncommon to find mentioned in the account of fires during the earlier period of the continuance of the volunteer system, that the president of the United States stood in line and passed buckets, and also representatives of foreign governments. But from the beginning the lack of discipline, the failure to take proper care of the apparatus and the temptations offered to young boys and men and the rowdy element to indulge in horse play and free fights were the subject of constant complaint. The troubles arising from such sources were not disposed of until a paid fire department was substituted for volunteer companies, and a good many years passed before that end was reached.

It was not until some twenty years after the city government had been formed that any attempt was made to provide a water supply for fire protection. Then rectangular openings were dug at important points and lined with brick, and in these reservoirs water was stored to be used in the emergency of a fire.[1]

The site of the city was a well-watered plain lying at the foot of the rim of hills that encircled it and forming the natural drainage ground for the surface water that flowed through it in numerous streams, some having their origin in springs within the city's area. One of the largest springs was on the north side of C Street, between 4½ and 6th streets, N. W.[2] Three names were given to the copious spring on the north side of F Street, a short distance west of 9th Street, which is now concealed from view beneath a portion of the old Masonic Temple at the northwest corner of 9th and F streets, N. W. It was known as Federal, also as Caffray's Spring, and then again as the Hotel Spring.[3]

Federal Spring also came to be the name of the one located

[1] The City Ordinance of July 11, 1818, making an appropriation for building such a reservoir, is the first provision of the sort.

[2] Lot 4, Square 490. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 16, 1801.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1802, Nov. 30, 1807, and Nov. 8, 1808. The name that came into common use was Caffray's Spring, which apparently had its origin in its nearness to St. Patrick's Church, of which Rev. Mr. Caffry or Caffray, as the name was commonly spelled, was the first minister.

just beyond the eastern bounds of the city and on a line with the extension of F Street, N. E.[1] An earlier name for this fountain, as springs were frequently termed at this period, was Young's or Stoddert's Spring, thus preserving the name of the original proprietor of the land and that of Benjamin Stoddert, who bought it.[2] Another abundant supply flowed from the series of springs in the square subsequently purchased by the government and known in later years as Franklin Park. From these head waters flowed a stream of considerable size from I Street, south along 13th Street, and thence east along H Street, crossing 12th, 11th and 10th streets a short distance south of H Street, and thence south through the tier of squares between 9th and 10th streets until it reached the Tiber at B Street. At an early day bridges spanned this stream in the centre of F and E streets. Another large stream had its source in the square bounded by 4th and 5th, K and L streets, N. W., and flowed in an almost straight line south, passing through the eastern part of Judiciary Square, crossing 4th Street between D and E streets and thence across 3d Street to Indiana Avenue along which it passed, joining the Tiber on the line of 1st Street south of C Street. The main stream of the Tiber that had its origin in branches arising north of the bounds of the city, flowed to the south between the Judiciary Square tributary and one that had its beginning at 12th and G streets, N. E. This latter stream reached the main stem of the Tiber just north of G Street between North Capitol Street and New Jersey Avenue. The two branches of the Tiber from the north united just south of L Street, between North Capitol and 1st streets, N. E., and the force of the waters was used to turn the stones of the grist-mill a short distance to the

[1] In recent years an artificial ice plant was built over the spring, and its waters are now turned into what has become one of the necessities of city life.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1803. The size of this water source was such as to lead B. H. Latrobe to give it serious attention as a possible supply for the dry dock which was proposed to be built at the navy yard. *Intelligencer*, Jan. 7, 1803. American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 104.

south, owned by Notley Young, and which was probably in use some time before the year 1802, when the earliest known reference is made to it.[1] Another large stream, known in later years as Reedy Branch, crossed Florida Avenue between 17th and 18th streets, N. W., and with many turns flowed south, but mainly within those lines coming into Massachusetts Avenue just west of 17th Street and along the Avenue nearly to Scott Circle, when it turned to the south, crossing Rhode Island Avenue and M Street between 16th and 17th streets, and thence west through the tier of squares between L and M streets, touching the former at 21st Street, and thence in a northwesterly direction, emptying into Rock Creek at the foot of 23d Street.

Between the Reedy Branch and the western branch of the Tiber was a wooded section that came to bear the name of the Whiteoak Slashes, and in general lay between 7th and 15th streets and some distance north of New York Avenue and of 11th and H streets.[2] The natural drainage of a large area of the city was the Tiber, with its sources in the encircling hills and many branches. As no attention was paid to a uniform grading of the ground the disposal of the rainfall and surface drainage continued to follow the course mapped out by nature. The numerous open watercourses when swollen by rains and the thaws of early spring were destructive of property along their borders and also the low grounds were turned into swamps, which constituted a menace to health. As the flood of waters rushed down from the hills and then quieted down as they spread over the surface of the plain south of Pennsylvania Avenue and west of 3d Street, W., deposits were left which choked up the canal, and from its earliest days impaired its navigation. Then when sewers emptying into the canal were built, and for

[1] American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 104. Latrobe's report on the dry dock, Dec. 27, 1802. What was evidently the easterly branch of the Tiber is referred to by Latrobe as Piney Branch.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 13, 1852. Reminiscences of George Watterston. The watercourses within the area of the city are traced in the map of the city engraved by W. I. Stone and published in the National Calendar for 1820, the third engraved map of the city.

many years they were only connected with the public buildings, the healthfulness of the locality was not improved.

The first water supply of the city came from wells which were dug by the city, one-half of the cost being assessed against the property of the citizens in the immediate neighborhood.[1] For many years the pump mender was a municipal officer of importance. From the wells citizens obtained their drinking water and the supply for domestic uses. Those who could afford it had their own wells, but for the large class who were unable to meet such an expense, the municipal pump was available. As the water supply came from the ground where the dwellings were located the experience of Philadelphia and other places where epidemics had pursued their devastating course would have in all probability been repeated in Washington. Fortunately the chief source of soil contamination in centres of population was not to be found in the capital city, owing to the foresight of the city fathers in the third year of their rule in prohibiting privy pits.[2] The salutary effect of such a regulation, which was never repealed, is to be found in the freedom of the city from diseases which are due to drinking impure water. But while a pump in one's own yard, or even a town pump at the corner of the block, was a great convenience, still not more than five years had passed since the city government began digging wells when some citizens wanted the greater facility of water flowing through pipes to a hydrant to be located near their homes. They did not expect to have it done at public expense, even in part, but all they asked was permission to lay the pipes underground along the streets. Permission of this sort was granted to residents living in the squares on each side of Pennsylvania Avenue between 6th and 7th streets, N. W. Forthwith water was conveyed from the spring on C Street to Pennsylvania Avenue and was the first service of the kind that the nation's capital enjoyed.[3] The fol-

[1] City Ordinance, Aug. 20, 1803, and July 24, 1804.

[2] The same, May 13, 1805. In Alexandria such a prohibition was not enacted until the ordinance of Aug. 7, 1811.

[3] The same, Sept. 22, 1808. While the city law granted this privilege to the inhabitants of the two squares, yet it seems probable it

lowing year a similar permit was granted to inhabitants on Pennsylvania Avenue between 9th and 14th streets to connect their houses and business places with Caffray's Spring. In this case, however, the city paid about one-third of the cost.[1] A number of years elapsed before any additions were made to the water pipe service of the city, and the pumps, with the aid of the pump doctor, continued to be the principal source of the city's supply.

The immunity enjoyed by the community from fire losses did not lessen their possibility in the minds of some citizens, and so an effort was made to organize an insurance company. The project was not a new one in the District, for two years before the removal of the government to the new locality, Georgetown citizens had been given authority by the Maryland legislature to organize a mutual company, and in the same year the Virginia legislature had given permission to organize a marine insurance company in Alexandria. One of Blodgett's abortive schemes was an insurance company organized in 1801. Two years later the prospects of business in Alexandria were so promising as to induce two companies doing business in Virginia to get authority from congress to extend their operations so as to include Alexandria.

There is no further record in regard to any of these companies, and so it is impossible to say whether or not there were any local fire insurance companies in the District in the year 1809. At that time a meeting of citizens of Washington was called by the mayor at the request of a number of persons interested in the subject.[2] As a result a committee was appointed to draft articles of association for a mutual fire insurance company. It may be concluded from a communication in the *Intelligencer*

was mainly a grant to John Underwood, the owner of the C Street Spring and also of the hotel building, later on the Indian Queen, then leased by George W. Lindsay.

[1] City Ordinance, Aug. 4, 1809. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 21, 1809. The locality of the spring was improved by the city, by building a paved footway to it and surrounding it with a railing. Ordinance, July 26, 1815.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 25, 1809.

commending the project that there were then no local means of insurance from loss by fire in the city.[1] The current feeling in regard to the fire department was no doubt expressed by the writer when he said, "There is another important reason — the bad organization and worse conduct of the institution called the fire company."

But the public did not respond, although nearly two years after the plan had been announced it was stated the contemplated number of subscribers had been obtained,[2] and the following year a committee was appointed to draft a constitution,[3] yet there is no further mention of the company.

Two years later congress granted a charter to a fire insurance company in Alexandria, and a year later another concern, the Columbian Insurance Co., began business in that town, and three years afterwards secured a charter from congress.[4] In the same year the Franklin Fire Insurance Co., which is still in existence, was chartered, the first privilege of the sort conferred on a company in the city of Washington. At the time the Franklin Co. began its career there were two local companies in Alexandria and none in Georgetown.

While the municipality and citizens were safeguarding their property interests, congress early saw to it that the District should stand side by side with the states of the Union in contributing its quota to the citizen soldiery constituting the militia of the United States. President Jefferson shared with the members of his party in the current enthusiasm that in a well-equipped militia lay the solution of the problem of doing without a standing army or at least keeping it down to a small enrolment. It was in accordance with this policy that congress early in the second year of the new administration inserted a section in a general law relating to the District giving the president authority to have the citizens of the District organized in accordance with the militia laws of Maryland and Virginia enacted prior to December, 1800.[5]

[1] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 5, 1810.
[2] Same, March 23, 1811.
[3] Same, March 12, 1812.
[4] United States Law, Feb. 16, 1818.
[5] Stats., Vol. 2, p. 193, May 3, 1802.

The president acted promptly. In a little more than a month he announced the appointment of John Mason of Georgetown as brigadier-general of the militia and of Daniel Carroll Brent, the United States marshal of the District, as colonel commandant of the first legion, or that of Washington County. In the course of another month came the appointment of the officers of the first and second legions or regiments, the captains of the cavalry, the artillery and of the eight companies of infantry.[1] The organization of the volunteer companies, as the artillery and cavalry were called, as well as of the battalion companies, as the infantry was termed, proceeded with such rapidity, aided no doubt by the current interest and also the circumstance that the people were entirely familiar with the system, which had been given up only about a year previously, that in four months after his appointment General Mason was in a position to issue an order for a muster or review of the first legion on the last day of October.[2] Three days before this date the legion of Alexandria County, drawn up in two battalions, cavalry and artillery on the right, the rifle company on the left, and under command of Colonel Peyton, the colonel commandant, passed in review on the parade grounds two miles from Alexandria before the president of the United States, the secretary of war and General Mason. An address was delivered by the militia commander.

A similar program was followed in Washington, where the martial array was drawn up on the race course that lay for the most part south of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 17th and 20th streets, N. W. It was noted with satisfaction that all the officers and many of the members of the volunteer companies were in complete uniform. The president and the secretary of war were spectators and General Mason, from the centre of a hollow square, delivered an address. As the men had been ordered to be on the ground at ten o'clock in the morning, and as the president did not appear until two o'clock, the first field day proved to be a rather long one.[3] But the *Washington*

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 26 and July 19, 1802.
[2] The same, Oct. 27, 1802.
[3] The same, Nov. 1 and 3, 1802.

*Federalist*, the organ of the Federal party, took exception to one feature of the occasion. The president as the commander-in-chief of the army, it maintained, should have been in uniform. The humor of Thomas Jefferson wearing a military uniform did not appeal to the critic, as he was taken up with the seriousness of a great principle at stake. It was this phase that drew the fire of the *Intelligencer* and furnished an opportunity for enforcing a popular Democratic doctrine. For while, exclaimed that journal, the president is, as commander-in-chief of the army, a military officer, he is head also of the civil government, which is the supreme authority of the land, so that the military dress is subordinate, while the civil dress is superior.[1]

From a military standpoint the appearance of the forces of the District was no doubt open to criticism, as all in line did not have uniforms. The following fall, it is recorded, when the Washington County muster was held, "all were in uniform except a few privates."[2] Perhaps not the least remarkable circumstance was that no less than 800 men were in the ranks on that occasion, representing the military strength of Washington County. The following year in the official returns of the militia of the country — the first when the figures for the District were given — the officers and men numbered 2241, or 17 per cent of the white population of the District.[3] While the general body of laws of the two states was regarded by congress as adequate for the needs of the District, yet it is evident that was not the case with the militia laws; for in the session following the enactment of 1802 a militia law for the District was provided. It was an elaborate measure and so complete that it remained, with but few changes, the only law on the subject for many years.[4] Within its scope came all able-bodied white

[1] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 5, 1802.

[2] The same, Oct. 10, 1803. A description of the uniforms adopted is given in the issue of May 9, 1803. Each man furnished his uniform, but the arms were provided by the general government.

[3] Message from the president of the United States, transmitting a statement of the militia of the states, Feb. 28, 1805. The returns for the years 1809 and 1812 give practically the same total.

[4] Stats., Vol. 2, p. 215, March 3, 1803.

males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five resident in the District except the officers judicial, executive and legislative of the government of the United States. The government employees other than officers were not exempt, and two years later a bill was introduced in the senate to free from militia duty clerks in the executive departments, but it was voted down.[1] The enrolment was made the duty of the officers of each company to be formed from those residing in the military districts into which the District was divided. Then the citizen thus enrolled, his consent not being necessary, received notice to attend a muster of the company. Failure to respond was punished by a fine ranging from seventy-five cents to five dollars. The law authorized the seizure and sale of personal property in cases where the penalties were not paid, and if no property could be found, the delinquent could be arrested and thrown into jail. Militia service was practically compulsory, yet such features of the law were accepted by the community without protest. This is evident from the circumstance that hardly two years had passed before the attention of congress was called to defects in the system in a memorial adopted by a delegated convention of citizens of the entire District.[2] Compulsory enlistment or service was not alluded to, but the District legislature was asked to reduce the number of annual musters from eight to five, and also that the collection of penalties be transferred from militia collectors to the Marshal of the District. The wishes of the citizens in these particulars were complied with, but not until seven years had passed.[3] For nine or ten years, then, a large proportion of the male citizens of the District were called upon eight times a year to don their uniforms and take part in a company or battalion or legionary muster, leaving for that day, without compensation and probably at a personal loss, their employment. It is evident after

[1] Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 1, p. 337, Jan. 22, 1805. Senate Journal, Vol. 3, p. 438.

[2] Proceedings of Delegates, etc., n. p. n. d. (1805.) Annals of Congress, 8th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 1621.

[3] Law of July 1, 1812. Then the annual musters were reduced to three.

the first flush of interest the law was not fully carried out; for otherwise the militia rolls would have reflected the growth of the population instead of recording a stationary total. As the years went on, the annual musters, which were the only fixed duty, became perfunctory affairs, attended by officers and men merely to escape the fines.

When, however, war threatened, then listlessness and indifference in the District militia disappeared. The spirit of the men was tested when the entire country was thrown into a state of excitement over the news in the summer of 1807 of the forcible detention and search of the United States frigate *Chesapeake* by a British vessel just outside the capes of Chesapeake Bay.[1]

At once companies were raised under the provisions of the militia law.[2] But while the young men of the town were seizing their muskets and hurrying to the muster field, the advocates of peace sought to avert the appeal to arms. A call was issued for a meeting of "the subscribers to the association for settling differences by arbitration." [3] As nearly a month passed and then another call for a meeting was issued, but with what result has not been preserved,[4] it may be concluded that the voice raised was not heard amid the clash of arms. The response to the call of the president for the quota of the District militia resulted in the tender of fifteen companies, aggregating 2000 men.[5] But war did not come, and the volunteers were not called upon for active duty. A further instance of the state of the public mind over the *Chesapeake* affair is found in the fund which was raised in Washington for the relief of the sailors who were injured. More than enough was contributed, and so it was decided to use the balance in helping to pay for the erection of a monument in the navy-yard in memory of

[1] The *Chesapeake* had just come down the Potomac from the Washington navy-yard, where she had been fitted out. Under the command of Commodore James Barron she sailed from Norfolk in June, 1807.

[2] *Intelligencer*, July 15, 17, 20 and 24, 1807.

[3] Same, Oct. 14, 1807.

[4] Same, Nov. 11, 1807.

[5] Same, Dec. 5, 1808.

the "heroes that fell before Tripoli" in 1804.[1] It had been made at the expense of officers of the navy and had been brought from Italy to the navy-yard in the *Constitution* and was erected under the direction of B. H. Latrobe in the year 1808.[2]

The government preparations were not confined to calling out the militia and in building gunboats; for during the winter of 1807–1808 congress also appropriated a million of dollars for the defence of the ports and harbors of the United States. By the end of the year Fort Washington on the Maryland side of the Potomac opposite Mount Vernon had been made a fortified place. For two years the government had occupied three acres comprising Digges Point, as the bluff overlooking the river where the Piscataway joins the waters of the Potomac, was known, but had made no use of it except as a depository in a small way of arms.[3] Then as the war clouds gathered, and the vessels of England's navy practically controlled the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, the defenceless and also exposed condition of the capital city was recognized. The senate received a report from the secretary of war in the last month of 1807, in which attention was called to the commanding position of Digges Point, which if provided with a battery and redoubt, and with the aid of gunboats, would afford "protection to Alexandria, Washington and Georgetown against the approach of any such naval force as reasonably could be expected."[4] In the course of a month the appropriation in bulk for fortifications was made and a portion of it was used at Fort Washington, as the place was officially known from the beginning of the

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 23, 1808.

[2] Same, Dec. 23, 1808. Also a new guide to Washington. George Watterston, 1842. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 14, Note, p. 28.

[3] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 190, Jan. 10, 1806. The price of the three acres, $6000, was paid April 15, 1808, and on Aug. 31, 1815, nine additional acres were acquired for $8451. Reports of Committees, House of Representatives, 20th Cong., 1st Sess., No. 195, March 18, 1828. Also War Department records. Also letter of Thomas Mason to Thomas A. Digges in James Dudley Morgan's collection.

[4] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 221.

government ownership.[1] An enclosed wall of brick and stone was built and also a battery of like material.[2] The wall of the fort had a semi-elliptical face with circular flanks on the side next to the Potomac, mounting thirteen guns and commanded by an octagon tower, a blockhouse of masonry, mounting six guns. By the end of the year the work was completed and a garrison of 120 men was established.[3] Amid the strands of the history of the early days of the District militia runs a thread of romance. One of the appointments made by the militia authorities in the summer of 1802 was that of John P. Van Ness as major. Some six months previously Mr. Van Ness had taken his seat in the house of representatives for the first time. He was then thirty-three years of age, a member of a well-known New York family of Dutch ancestry, and had come from his family home Kinderhook to represent his district in congress. Well connected, with a handsome person and affable manners, he was popular and admired. A week after the session closed, in May, 1802, he married Marcia Burnes, the only daughter of the widow of David Burnes.[4] Miss Burnes was twenty years of age and was living with her mother in the house where she was born on the banks of the Tiber on the west side of 17th Street. She had beauty and accomplishments and was heir to the large property left by her father, situated for the most part in that section of the city which even at the time of her marriage was drawing to it the principal business and population. The house, a long, one-story and attic frame structure, which was the home of the family when it was surrounded by farm lands, still served that purpose, although it then stood in

[1] The popular name in the early years was Fort Warburton. The tract of land of which it had been a part was patented in the year 1641 as the Manor of Warburton to an ancestor of Thomas A. Digges, who at that time was occupying the old manor house. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 7, p. 6.

[2] "The first digging of earth of the first fort at Warburton commenced on the 9th of May, 1808." Letter of Richard L. Humphrey, July 20, 1818, in James Dudley Morgan's collection.

[3] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 236 and 245.

[4] Funeral discourse on the death of Mrs. Marcia Van Ness. Rev. William Hawley, p. 31. Washington, 1832.

a city square bounded by city streets which were delineated on paper even though they had no real existence. Here it was the wedding took place, and there the bridal couple made their home with the widowed mother.

A little more than a month after the wedding Mr. Van Ness received his militia appointment. The following December, when the second session of the seventh congress opened, he answered to the roll-call and entered upon the discharge of his duties. A few weeks later the House was called upon to decide whether Mr. Van Ness, holding "an office under the United States" as major in the District militia, was, under the constitution, qualified to retain his seat. The decision was in the negative and the seat was declared vacant. In the course of the discussion, Mr. Van Ness expressed regret that his constituents should be deprived of representation, but he did not offer to take the obvious step of resigning what was merely an honorary position.[1] It is evident that his marriage had determined his future, which was to be in the District instead of in the state of his birth. Five years passed and Mrs. Burnes died.[2] Her extensive realty holdings came to the daughter and then to the latter's husband. Soon after the death of Mrs. Burnes a house was built by Mr. Van Ness on the south side of D Street, adjoining the southwest corner of 12th Street, N. W.[3] The new house was of brick, built in the style of the period, with a broad frontage, the second story surmounted by a sloping roof pierced with dormer-windows. It was in this house that Mr. Van Ness entertained his friend Washington Irving when he visited the city in the early months of 1811. Mr. Irving made the acquaintance for the first time of Mrs. Van Ness, whom he describes as "a pretty, pleasant little woman and quite gay."[4] The master of the house was widening his sphere as a

[1] Annals of Congress, 7th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 395, Jan. 17, 1803.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 2, 1807.

[3] The same, Sept. 14, 1808. The old house was rented. (*Intelligencer*, Oct. 9, 1813.) Its sturdy frame survived more than three-quarters of a century and then was torn down. *Evening Star*, May 24, 1894. The square where it stood is now the site of the Pan-American Building.

[4] Life and Letters, Vol. 1, p. 263, Jan. 9, 1811.

man of affairs; for he was president of the branch in Washington of the United States Bank, the largest financial institution of the day.[1] He had retained his connection with the militia, and when, after a service of three years as colonel of the first legion, Daniel Carroll Brent resigned, he was succeeded by Mr. Van Ness.[2] When General Mason retired as head of the militia service in 1811, on account of the demands upon his time of the duties of superintendent of the Indian trade, Mr. Van Ness was named in his place.[3] As compared with the home which Mr. Van Ness built some eight years later, going back to the same square where the Burnes house stood, the D Street house was small and insignificant. But it was in keeping with the way of living in the Washington of that day. Until the more stately Van Ness residence was built there were no other private houses within the limits of the city except the Octagon, Duddington and Young houses that compared with it either in size or in cost.

An addition had been made to the class of larger residences in the District in the year 1810 when Thomas Peter, whose wife was a granddaughter of Mrs. Washington and who had early established his home at 2618 K Street, N. W., employed Dr. Thornton to design a house which he built on a site that still remains somewhat reduced in extent on the north side of Q Street, between 31st and Valley streets. As Tudor Place, and still in the occupancy of his descendants, this old house remains a charming example of the simple lines of the architecture of

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 10, 1806. A position he held until the charter of the bank expired.

[2] The same, Jan. 28, 1805. Three years later Mr. Brent was succeeded as United States Marshal by Washington Boyd, the treasurer of the city.

[3] The same, April 6 and July 4, 1811. The Indian trade was one of the benevolent devices of the government and was designed to supply the Indians with such articles as they needed in exchange for furs. A large storehouse was located in Georgetown, and the character of its contents may be gathered from an advertisement signed by John Mason and printed in the *Intelligencer* of April 21, 1809. It is in part as follows: "Upward of 4000 racoon skins offered for sale at the Indian Trade Office, Georgetown."

the period. In the year 1805 Joseph Nourse, the register of the treasury, bought four acres of the southern section of the tract of land bounded by Q Street on the south and 28th Street on the west near the edge of the gorge of Rock Creek and then just north of the corporate limits of Georgetown. The northern portion was owned by Samuel Davidson, where he had erected a residence which was called Evermay and which still remains a handsome place in spite of the years.[1] Mr. Nourse lived there until about the year 1813, when he sold the place to Charles Carroll, a brother of Daniel Carroll of Duddington, and erected a home on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, between Quebec and Sedgwick streets, owned by his descendants as late as the year 1912.[2] In giving up even such a home as he had on the banks of Rock Creek, with ample grounds about it, and retiring to a farm, Mr. Nourse's course was not without precedent, As early as 1803, Samuel H. Smith, the editor of the *Intelligencer*, was living on his farm Sidney,[3] while to the south was Clover Hill, the home of Dr. Phineas Bradley, of the Post Office Department.[4] Mr. Bradley bought his farm in the year 1809, and five years later his brother, Abraham Bradley, assistant postmaster general, became the owner of Chevy Chase, a tract of 233 acres a short distance north of the District line in Maryland.[5] Three years before Mr. Bradley gave up his city home, Judge William Cranch offered for sale the two-story frame house where he was living at Pennsylvania Avenue and 14th Street, S. E., and removed to Alexandria.[6] The mayor of the city, Robert Brent, living in the Notley Young house on G Street,

[1] Land records, Liber B, fol. 53. $650 is the consideration named in the Davidson deed dated June, 1794, for the $10\frac{9}{16}$ acres.

[2] The same, Liber A, F, fol. 13. Mr. Carroll called the place Bellevue. The house stands directly in the line of Q Street.

[3] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 43. The property is now the site of the Catholic University.

[4] Coll. Hist. Soc. The Bradley Family, p. 134. The farm is now Glenwood Cemetery.

[5] The same, p. 133. The Chevy Chase Club now owns the property.

[6] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 19, 1810. Greenleaf and Law, p. 56. He did not return to Washington to live until the year 1826. Judge Cranch also

S. W., was considered by an early English observer as ranking with Daniel Carroll and John Tayloe as having homes which were the only houses of gentlemen in the city he could recall.[1]

About the year 1809 Mr. Brent left the old manor house and took possession of a house he had built at the southeast corner of Maryland Avenue and 12th Street, S. W.[2] It was not until after the second war with England that even one member of either house had his own home establishment within the city.[3] During the first seven or eight years the members for the most part came without their families and lived in boarding houses and hotels. For two years and a half after Mr. Jefferson became president the diplomatic corps consisted of four persons, only one of whom had the rank of minister.[4] There is no record up to the year 1803 of a representative of a foreign government establishing his home in the new district, except M. Pichon, who lived in Georgetown,[5] until the arrival of Anthony Merry, the minister from England in the fall of that year. After landing at Norfolk with Mrs. Merry he came directly to the city and at once leased from Robert Peter two large brick houses on the south side of K Street between 26th and 27th streets, N. W., where also his successors, David M. Erskine and Francis J. Jackson, lived.[6] Mr. Merry described the location of his new home as

owned a farm about one mile from the Washington bridge, between the Washington and the Georgetown roads.

[1] From a review of a manuscript of a book by Sir Augustus Foster, secretary British legation, that was not published, giving gossipy details about Washington during the years 1804–1806. *Quarterly Review*, 1841. Extracts in the Washington Sketch Book, 1864.

[2] Deed of Nicholas Young to Robert Brent of the entire Square 327. Nov. 3, 1809.

[3] Places of abode of members of both houses, 1805, 1807, 1809 and 1816.

[4] Marquis Carlson M. De Irujo was the minister from Spain, Edward Thornton and L. A. Pichon, chargé des affaires from England and France, and Pedro Pederson, consul from Denmark.

[5] Dr. Mitchell's Letters from Washington. *Harper's*. April, 1879, p. 744, Feb. 8, 1802.

[6] Adams's History, Vol. 2, p. 362, and Vol. 5, p. 116. The houses now known as 2618 and 2620 K Street are marked by a bronze tablet

situated "on the commons which is meant to be the city of Washington." They were "mere shells of houses," he states, "with bare walls and without fixtures of any kind, even without a pump or well."

Six years later, when Mr. Jackson arrived, the appearance of the city reminded him of Hemstead Heath, and he speaks of his house as standing "among the fields, looking over Rock Creek to Georgetown." "I put up a covey of partridges," he wrote, Oct. 7, 1809, "about three hundred yards from the house of congress, yclept the Capitol." He admired what visitors, both native and foreign, from the earliest days of the city had spoken about, "the beautifully picturesque appearance of the country," and had "no where seen finer scenery than is caused by the Potomac and the woods and hills about it, yet it has a wild, desolate air from being so scantily and rudely cultivated and for the want of population."[1]

A year after he came to the city, Mr. Merry had near at hand a diplomat holding an equal rank, for General Turreau, a marshal of France and noted for showy uniforms, had presented his credentials as minister from that country and established the legation in the corner house of the Seven Buildings at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 19th Street, N. W.[2] Mr. Merry's description of the bareness and desolation of Washington, while borne out in the main by the actual conditions, was no doubt painted in gloomier colors than possibly otherwise would have been the case if he and Mrs. Merry had not been vexed and disturbed by the social order which Mr. Jefferson had seen fit to adopt. The weekly levees of Washington and Adams

placed there by the D. A. R. committee on historic spots. The will of Robert Peter (Register of Wills Office, Vol. 1, p. 169, June 23, 1809) and deeds by David Peter and others serve to identify the houses. According to a deed recorded Oct. 14, 1812 (Liber A, D., folio 319), Mr. Erskine at one time occupied a Peter house on lot 31, Square 100 (west side of 20th between L and M streets). Prior to 1808 some of the attachés lived in one of the Six Buildings. *Intelligencer*, March 25, 1808.

[1] Adams's History, Vol. 5, p. 116.

[2] *Intelligencer*, March 15, 1809. Advertisement offering for rent the house lately occupied by General Turreau.

were done away with. As the servant of the people the president could be seen at any time. When brought together in society Mr. Jefferson held all are perfectly equal, whether foreign or domestic, titled or untitled. The principle of equality or pêle-mêle was to be observed.[1] While doing away with the weekly receptions, Jefferson continued the custom of receiving those who called to pay their respects to the president on the first day of the year and on the fourth of July. The first public reception held in the president's house in the new city was on the national anniversary in 1801. Six months later, on the first day of the new year, the people went to the president's house and greeted the president and ate the cake and drank the wine that was passed around, and then went "to the mammoth room and saw the mammoth cheese" as the president expressed it, after receiving his guests in the room now known as the Blue Room and in extending to them an invitation to go into the East Room and view the cheese weighing some 1600 pounds, which had been presented to him that day.[2]

The custom of going from house to house on New Year's day, making calls, as observed in New York city at that period, was not adopted in Washington for a good many years; Dr. Mitchell notes that every one went to the president's and then returned home.[3]

But the hospitalities at the president's house were not reduced in extent, only the form was changed. President Jefferson had a French cook and his wines were famous as well as abundant.[4] On one occasion at a dinner given by the presi-

[1] Jefferson code of etiquette. Works, Vol. 9, p. 454. Foreign ministers were to pay the first visit to the ministers of the nation, their wives were to receive the first visit from the wives of national ministers or from other residents.

[2] Life of Manasseh Cutler, Vol. 2, p. 54. The great cheese, which did not contain a drop of milk from a federal cow, had been brought on a sleigh from Cheshire, Mass., by the promoter of this novel gift, John Leland, a Baptist minister. Mr. Cutler ate some of this great cheese, which was served with the cake and punch at the New Year's reception at the president's house, Jan. 1, 1805, four years later.

[3] Dr. Mitchell's Letters. *Harper's*. April, 1879, p. 742, Jan. 4, 1802. [4] See Dr. Mitchell's Letters, and Rev. Mr. Cutler's Life.

dent, Dr. Mitchell, who was a cultivated New Yorker and noted for his scientific as well as general knowledge, states that ice cream was served in the form of balls of frozen material enclosed in covers of warm pastry. The president entertained the members of congress in blocks of ten, but as it was remarked, "all federalists one day, all democrats another."[1] But party feeling became so intense that presidential dinner invitations were not sent to members of the party opposed to the administration.[2] In addition to the novelty of a social experience when dinner guests were left to go to the table as they pleased and to seat themselves as they saw fit, the English minister had an uneasy feeling, that soon gave place to wrath, when he attended his first dinner at the president's house in the fall of 1802 that an insult was intended to England when the president, whose home had no woman at its head, gave his arm to Mrs. Madison, the wife of the secretary of state, and escorted her to the table, thus ignoring Mrs. Merry, to whom custom gave that honor. The English government was duly informed of this proceeding, as well also of the further trial to the minister's dignity, both personally and officially, for as he states when he was about to seat himself next to the wife of the Spanish minister, a member of congress quickly passed him and took the seat.[3] A few weeks before this Mr. Merry, in full uniform and escorted by the secretary of state, came to the president's house to be formally presented. He was surprised, and also shocked, to find the president in shabby disordered dress and wearing slippers without heels.

This was the garb Mr. Jefferson wore when Senator Plummer of New Hampshire called upon him in December, 1802, but two years later the same observer notes the president had laid aside the old slippers, red waistcoat and soiled corduroy small-clothes, and wore a black suit with clean linen, and his hair was powdered. It is presumed that politics, both national and international,

[1] Life of William Plummer, p. 245, Dec. 25, 1802.

[2] Same, p. 338, Jan. 1, 1806. "The Federalists generally declined calling on the President to-day with the compliments of the season on the ground they had not been invited to dine with him this session."

[3] Letter quoted in Adams's History, Vol. 2, p. 370.

had as much to do with forming the president's social code as democratic principles, of which he was the exponent. As soon as Mr. Madison came to the president's house with his wife, whose beauty and social charm and tact made her a universal favorite, even after her husband was out of public life, the recognized custom was revived and the evening levees or drawing-rooms became popular features of social life.[1] In the meantime the social world of Washington had its first thrill of excitement. Nothing else was talked about but the Merrys' affair with the president, and as stated it was made the subject of lengthy despatches to the home government. It was not an extensive circle, for two years later the Washington social season of two weeks in a winter was described as a round of "parties crowded into little rooms in the different houses here by going three and four miles and sometimes six miles every evening."[2] When congress adjourned and the summer came, the members of the diplomatic corps left Washington for a more comfortable and interesting place of residence. For the most part Philadelphia was the choice. In the fall of 1808, the editor of the *Intelligencer* stated in reply to an inquiry relative to the residence of foreign ministers "that none of them are now or have been for a considerable time at the seat of government."[3] Both Presidents Jefferson and Madison went to their homes in Virginia during the recess of congress, but kept in touch with the public business through the mails.[4] When President Madison had reason in the middle of the summer of 1809 to go to Washington for a few days, he describes the city in a letter to his wife as "a solitude."[5] Two years later Washington Irving, who continued in the city after the adjournment of congress in March, exclaims,

[1] Adams's History, Vol. 5, p. 121.

[2] The Two Duchesses. London, 1898, p. 275. March 10, 1806. Augustus Foster, secretary of legation, to his mother, the Duchess of Devonshire.

[3] Oct. 31, 1808.

[4] "The Postmaster General has established a daily conveyance of the mail from Fredericksburg to Monticello during my stay." Letter of Jefferson, Washington, July 31, 1807. Jefferson Papers, Series 6, Vol. 12, p. 228.

[5] Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison, p. 66.

"You cannot imagine how forlorn this desert city appears to me, now the great tide of casual population has rolled away."[1]

But as the years went on the social attractions of Washington exerted an influence which has continued to be an important factor in its development. Members of congress ceased to live while in Washington as monks in their cells or boarding houses, as Mr. Wolcott concluded they would have to do in the new city, and which to a large extent was done in the early years. In the fall of 1811 Mrs. Madison records "we have now members in abundance with their wives and daughters."[2] As intelligent observers of the day record, many marriages followed a Washington season. It was a society not of wealth, but of interesting men and women of the country. Card parties where money stakes were not uncommon, balls and dinners, were the usual round. The women were described by one writer as "generally highly gifted in mental as they are also adorned with personal endowments"[3]; while another observer a few years earlier declared he had never seen "prettier girls anywhere." They were also "good tempered and if not well informed, capable of becoming so."[4]

"I may compare this place," wrote Washington Irving in 1811, "to a huge library where a man may turn to any department of knowledge he pleases and find an author at hand into which he may dip, until his curiosity is satisfied."[5] He found "the most complete medley of characters I have ever mingled amongst." His social engagements for a week comprised a dinner with the officers' mess at the Barracks, and in the evening a ball at Mr. Van Ness's; a dinner with General Turreau, and in the evening Mrs. Madison's levee, "which was brilliant and crowded with interesting men and fine women"; a dinner at Mr. Latrobe's;

[1] Life and Letters. March 11, 1811. Vol. 1, p. 273.

[2] Memoirs and Letters, p. 82.

[3] Warden, p. 97. This book, the second giving an account of the District, and the first describing the city, was written by D. B. Warden, who was in the diplomatic service of this country in France and the author of a number of books. He visited Washington in 1811.

[4] Augustus Foster. Washington Sketch Book, pp. 104 and 105.

[5] Life and Letters. Vol. 1, p. 268.

a dinner with the secretary of the navy, Paul Hamilton, who occupied Mr. Tayloe's house, and in the evening a ball at the mayor's, Mr. Brent's, residence.[1] Mr. Irving made a second visit to the city in April of the same year in connection with the commercial business in which he was then interested with his brothers, and states he made "a very expeditious journey of 52 hours from New York." He travelled by stage except from the head of the Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore, where he used the steamboat. At Baltimore he took an extra stage at 8 A.M., and reached Washington about half past four in the afternoon. On his first trip in January he states he reached Washington, "after literally struggling through the mud and mire all the way from Baltimore," while on the same occasion "my journey to Baltimore was terrible and sublime." To Washington at the close of the year 1805 came Joel Barlow, author and ardent Republican, after a long residence abroad, where he had accumulated wealth. He was a friend and correspondent of Mr. Jefferson, and as early as 1801 he had informed the president that his private affairs were on such a footing "that my intention is to devote the remainder of my life to the promotion of the solid improvement of the country, social, political and economical."[2]

On account of his wife's health the voyage home was not undertaken until May, 1805. In the meanwhile he was deeply interested in the experiments made by his friend, Robert Fulton, both in France and in England, with the steamboat and submarine torpedo. Soon after he reached his native country, Mr. Barlow wrote to Mr. Jefferson that he proposed "to pass the winter at or near Washington, and to look out for a place to pitch our tents for the residue of our lives."[3] By December, 1805, Mr. Barlow was occupying rooms at Mrs. Doynes', a congressional boarding house on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, just west of 6th Street, N. W.[4] At this time a memorial had been

[1] Life and Letters. Vol. 1, p. 268.

[2] Barlow to Jefferson, Aug. 25, 1801. Jefferson Papers, 2d Series, Vol. 7, p. 9. Also other letters upon which the account is based.

[3] Same, Aug. 4, 1805.

[4] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 48. Mrs. Smith, who was interested in Mrs. Doynes' success, states she recommended

laid before congress by Mr. Blodgett, asking for federal aid for a national university, and Mr. Barlow prepared what he called a "Prospectus of a National University," which was issued in pamphlet form the latter part of January, 1806, from the press of Samuel H. Smith.[1] The following fall Robert Fulton returned to the United States, where he found the engine which had been ordered to be made in London after the tests in the year 1804 on the Seine in France, which had convinced him as well as his moneyed associate, Robert R. Livingston, of the practicability of the steamboat, although it had not made a similar impression on the commission appointed by Napoleon.[2] For the two years following the experience in France Mr. Fulton was engaged in the fruitless undertaking of trying to convince the English government officials of the merits of a submarine torpedo which he had invented. A few weeks after he reached this country he hastened to Washington, intent on submitting to the American government his torpedo.[3]

In the meanwhile Mr. Livingston had secured from the New York legislature an extension of the steamboat monopoly; a boat was built and the engine brought from England, set up and in August, 1807, the *Clermont* made her successful trip.

The first season spent by Mr. Fulton in Washington appears to have been devoted to a campaign of education among the statesmen for the adoption of his torpedoes. He found in New York more interest in his plan of warfare, as the citizens there were uneasy about the defenceless condition of the city and especially so after the *Chesapeake* affair. He showed his invention in New York, and in July, 1807, sent to the president an elaborate description of his torpedo.

the place to Mr. Barlow, who has taken "a parlor and a bedroom which are very neatly furnished, and the stable. He pays her $40 a week for himself, wife, and two servants."

[1] He sent the manuscript first to the president. Jan. 7, 1806. Jefferson Papers. Same.

[2] McMaster, Vol. 3, p. 489.

[3] This was the first visit of Mr. Fulton to Washington. The *Intelligencer* in the issue of Jan. 2, 1807, states, "We have the pleasure of noting the arrival in this city of our fellow-citizen Mr. Fulton, a man no less distinguished for science than beneficence, etc."

When he returned to Washington in the fall of 1807, after the record-breaking trip of the *Clermont*, he found his friend Mr. Barlow had carried out his long-cherished purpose and had established himself in a permanent home. It is interesting to note that Mr. Barlow was the pioneer of a class, that in late years has become numerous, people who have the opportunity and the means to live where they please and who choose Washington. He purchased in 1807 from William Augustine Washington the finest place in the vicinity of the city. His appreciation of the location and the beauty of the surroundings of this residence, with grounds of some sixty acres between the banks of Rock Creek and the bounds of the city, is preserved in the name Belair, with which he replaced the name Rock Hill, but later on substituted Kalorama, "the beautiful view."[1]

When Mr Barlow took possession of his new home Robert Fulton was his guest and it was from there that he carried on his campaign to win governmental recognition for his invention, the submarine torpedo.[2] His efforts were continued for several years. Under date of Feb. 9, 1809, he wrote to the president, "I have invited some members of the senate and house of representatives to call at Kalorama on Sunday next at one o'clock to see the experiment of harpooning and investigate the principle of torpedo attacks." These experiments took place in Rock Creek.

Two years after Mr. Barlow became a resident of the city he joined with other citizens in organizing the Bank of Washington.[3] When the citizens held a fourth of July celebration in 1810, Mr. Barlow was invited to pronounce the oration.[4] As "our first poet," as Mr. Jefferson termed him,[5] and as "the

[1] Barlow to Jefferson, dated "Belair cedevant Rock Hill." Dec. 9, 1807. Jefferson Papers, 2d Series, Vol. 7, p. 9.

[2] The first letter of Fulton in the Jefferson Papers dated Belair is on Dec. 9, 1807, and the first with Kalorama in the date line is a letter of Feb. 9, 1809.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 6, 1809.

[4] The same, July 3, 1810.

[5] Jefferson to Barlow, June 14, 1807. Jefferson Papers. 2d Series, Vol. 7, p. 9.

greatest poet of our country," as Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith described him,[1] and as the friend of the president and a man of wealth, Mr. Barlow for the four years of his residence was a figure of importance in the social and official life of the capital. He was thought also to have political aspirations, and if so they were in a measure at least gratified by his receiving in the year 1811 the appointment of minister to France at a period when the relations between the two countries were delicate. He left Washington, and as it proved finally, on this mission in the fall of 1811, and his home at Kalorama was leased by the French minister to this country, M. Seurrier, who shared with Mr. Barlow the love of the beauty and adornment of nature and spent much time in caring for the extensive grounds that surrounded the house.[2] In the year 1805, when Mr. Barlow came to the city, Gilbert Stuart, the successful portrait painter of the day, had just closed his studio in Washington, which he had for two seasons. About the date of Mr. Stuart's coming, St. Memin was also established in the city, adding to his collection of engraved miniature portraits.[3]

[1] First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 48.

[2] A year after the death of her husband, while on a journey in Russia in 1812, Mrs. Barlow resumed her residence at Kalorama, where she lived until her death in 1818. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 13, p. 106.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 12, 1804. An announcement of St. Memin, then apparently spending his second season in the city. His period of Washington residence was from 1803 to 1806, while Stuart spent the seasons of 1803–1805 in Washington. In the year 1805 (*Intelligencer*, Feb. 25) St. Memin had his studio at the southwest corner of 14th and F streets. Stuart's studio was on Pennsylvania Avenue, in the neighborhood of 6th Street, and it was afterwards occupied by C. Boyle, a painter from Baltimore. *Intelligencer*, March 11, 1808. Mr. Boyle subsequently established a museum of natural history, the first in the city. *Intelligencer*, March 7, 1811. See also Warden, p. 83.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ECHOES OF THE BURR CONSPIRACY

The active operations of the futile Burr conspiracy in the southwest came to an end practically at the close of the year 1806. The final scenes were then transferred in part to Washington. For there had been brought to the city under arrest by the military authorities in New Orleans, Enrick Bollman and Samuel Swartwout, emissaries of Burr charged with treason. They had been seized without legal warrant, and it was the desire of the president that they should be prosecuted. As soon as the prisoners reached the city, which was in January, 1807, the president on the same day came to the capitol and delivered to the district attorney, Walter Jones, the affidavit of General James Wilkinson, military commander of the territory of Orleans, and instructed him to demand of the court a warrant for the arrest.[1] The case was heard by the judges of the circuit court, and with the chief judge, Mr. Cranch, dissenting because of "the gross violation of personal liberty," the warrant was issued. Less than two years before Judge Cranch, a relative and an appointee of John Adams, as well as a member of the Federal party, had been appointed by the president to be the chief judge of the court. He had reason to feel under obligations to Jefferson, and at this time he knew that the president was most anxious to bring the conspirators to justice. Judge Cranch, however, followed what he saw was the path of duty, and in doing so left on record that never in his life had he been more anxious.

The case of the two men was taken on habeas corpus proceedings to the United States Supreme Court, and that tribunal set them free. It was this decision that stirred the indignation of members of the dominant party and led to the introduction of a bill to suspend such writs for a given period.

[1] Letter of Judge Cranch. Greenleaf and Law, p. 53.

The case of the government was argued before both courts by Walter Jones, a resident of Alexandria, and for three years past holding the office of district attorney by appointment of President Jefferson. For seventeen years, or until the year 1821, Mr. Jones, who the year following the case above noted, established his home in this city, held the office. His charm as a public speaker and his knowledge of the law gave him for many years the first place at the District bar. Early in January another manifestation of the Burr case was seen in Washington, astonishing in its revelations of the possibilities of the depths of human degradation. The publication of the *Atlantic World*, a weekly newspaper, was begun by John Wood in the interests of Aaron Burr.[1] As was openly stated in the published prospectus, the editor, John Wood, was the late editor of the *Western World* of Kentucky, the publication of which was begun in Frankfort, Kentucky, the previous summer. The proprietor was Joseph H. Daveiss, the United States district attorney of Kentucky and a strong Federalist, and his object was to bring to light the connection of certain leading men of the Republican party of that state in the movement in 1787 to establish an independent government west of the Alleghanies under the protection of Spain. The men who were to be attacked were believed by Daveiss to be reviving the same project under the leadership of Burr. He secured as editor of the paper John Wood, whose standards as a man and inordinate appetite for notoriety may be judged from the fact that he had written a slanderous book entitled "The history of the administration of John Adams," having first made an agreement with Aaron Burr that he would purchase and suppress it, which was done. Now Wood appeared as the editor of a paper attacking Burr, and then some seven months later began the publication of a paper in Washington in his defence, and as it was said at the time with money furnished by Burr.[2] It is probable the publication was not continued many weeks. In addition to affording

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 9 and 23, 1807.

[2] Dr. Mitchell's Letters. Feb. 13, 1807. *Harper's*, April, 1879, p. 751.

a rather unusual instance of venality, the issue of the *Atlantic World* has another claim to attention, as it was the first newspaper to be published in Washington in the interests of an individual rather than of an individual as the representative of a party. There was no pretence that the paper was to supply a need in the community where it was to be published, nor in fact did the conditions of the newspaper business in the District during the seven years that had elapsed since the removal of the government justify sanguine expectations in a field where the rate of mortality seemed to be on the increase. Only one daily paper now was published where seven years before four had appeared. The surviving daily was the *Alexandria Daily Advertiser*.[1] It shared the field south of the Potomac with a semi-weekly, the *Expositor*.[2] During the summer of 1807 the editor of the *Expositor*, Richard Dinmore, began the publication in Washington of the *Washington Expositor and Weekly Register*, devoted to political economy. The Alexandria paper ceased to appear, and he announced the new Washington weekly would be supplied to the subscribers.[3]

The vacant place in the Alexandria community was not filled until four years later, when the *Alexandria Herald*, a semi-weekly, was issued in June, 1811.[4]

Georgetown figured more largely than Alexandria in the annals of the early District press, due of course to its proximity to the national capital. It was selected as the place of publication of the *Washington Federalist*, the organ of the minority

[1] The name was changed in 1809 to the *Alexandria Gazette*. It was Federal in politics.

[2] First issued as a tri-weekly under the name of *Alexandria Expositor and Columbian Advertiser*, Nov. 26, 1802, Vol. 1, No. 1, and then as a semi-weekly, probably in November, 1805, when the name was simply the *Expositor*. Also weekly edition for country subscribers under the name of the *Alexandria Expositor*.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 28, 1807.

[4] The Wisconsin Historical Library has a file from June, 1811, to June, 1812. Also the same as tri-weekly from June, 1815, to May, 1819. A note in the catalogue states the paper was established in June, 1811, by John Corse and N. Rounsavell, and was published by them until 1819. Afterward by Rounsavell and Henry Pittman. By Pittman alone after 1822.

party, and at the close of nine years, first as a daily and then as a tri-weekly, it ceased to appear.[1] During this period a number of ventures were made from presses set up in Georgetown.[2] In Washington, where the field had been first occupied after it had become a national centre by the *National Intelligencer*, that paper continued to maintain a dominant position. It was issued tri-weekly from the beginning to the year 1813, when it became daily.[3]

At the time the *Intelligencer* was broadening its scope, the *Federalist* was bringing to an unsuccessful close its career. It may naturally be inferred that the prestige of the dominant party and public patronage had a decisive influence in the destinies of these two papers. The *Intelligencer*, however, in its material prosperity undoubtedly reflected the influence of the policy dictated by the calm, sound and judicious temperament of the editor, Mr. Smith, which was continued in the unusual

[1] The latest issues known are one or more of the year 1809 in the American Antiquarian Society library.

[2] Some of these are as follows: *Columbian Repository*, a weekly, Harvard College library, Sept. 30, 1803, Vol. 1, No. 1. It had more the character of a periodical than a newspaper. A publication similar in this respect was the *Olio*, a weekly. The file of this paper in the same library begins with March 13, 1803, Vol. 1, No. 46, and ends with Aug. 4, 1803, Vol. 2, No. 6. The *Spirit of Seventy-Six*, about 1809–1814, semi-weekly, Edward C. Stannard succeeded by J. M. and J. B. Carter and then by the latter. First published in Washington and then in Georgetown. *Intelligencer*, Nov. 29, 1809, announcement of the proposed publication "formerly printed in Richmond." See Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 9, p. 101, for an account of this paper, of which the issue of March 4, 1814, in the library of congress is the only copy known.

There is also a record of the publication of the *Museum and Georgetown Advertiser*, Jan. 21–Oct. 10, 1809, at first weekly and then semi-weekly; the *Independent American*, tri-weekly. *Intelligencer*, March 23, 1811, advertisement offering the property for sale.

[3] At the beginning of the year 1809, Joseph Gales, Jr., who had been connected with the paper for two years became associated with Mr. Smith in the management, and a year later purchased the property, Mr. Smith, on account of his health, retiring for a time to private life. (*Intelligencer*, Sept. 3, 1810.) In October, 1812, William W. Seaton, late editor of the *Raleigh Register* and a brother-in-law of Mr. Gales, acquired an interest, and the paper was issued by the firm of Gales and Seaton. (*Intelligencer*, Oct. 8, 1812.)

partnership of business friends that has surrounded the firm of Gales and Seaton with a sort of a halo of romance that Charles Dickens threw about the firm of Cheeryble Bros.

Two years after Mr. Smith retired from the paper G. B. Warden, who was familiar with European conditions, stated in his book about the District that the *Intelligencer* was regarded abroad as the organ of the government. But such eminence, which was no doubt gratifying in the editorial room, was not in evidence at this period to any large extent in the business office. It was not until some years after the war of 1812 that the *Intelligencer* was able to begin to own the building where its business was located. Certainly there is no indication for the first twelve years that its prosperity was such as to attract competitors. For as the years went on it was left practically alone in the field. After the early competitors had dropped out and up to the year 1807 there is only the record of the attempt to start two papers in Washington and from the titles it may be concluded that both were designed to appeal to the general tastes of the public for reading matter rather than to its interests in political and current affairs.[1] John Wood's *Atlantic World* in 1807 presumably ended its career in the course of a few months, and then in the first month of 1808 appeared the *Washington Expositor*, a weekly issued by Dinmore and Cooper.[2] In the same month Mr. Dinmore began the issue of his paper, the publication of a weekly register of politics was begun by J. B. Colvin with the title *Colvin's Weekly Register*.[3] The name was soon changed to the *Monitor*, and it was issued three times a week and then in the summer of 1809, less than two years, the editor announced that owing to insufficient support, the

[1] The *American Literary Advertiser*, a weekly which began publication about March, 1802, was in existence as late as Sept. 23, 1803, Vol. 2, No. 82. Except a notice in the *Intelligencer*, of Nov. 30, 1804, that it was proposed to publish the *American Magazine*, nothing more is known of that venture.

[2] Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan. 2, 1808. The death of Mr. Dinmore occurred two years later. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 28 and Oct. 9, 1811.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 13, 1807. Octavo form from Jan. 16 to April 30, 1808.

publication would cease.[1] The printing materials at the office, 11th and F streets, N.W., were offered for sale, and as that had not produced enough to pay his debts, Mr. Colvin announced he would give up each year to his creditors $300 of his $1150 salary as clerk in the state department,[2] and where it was charged he continued to employ his pen in the interests of the Republican party.[3] From journalism as an interest outside of his government position Mr. Colvin now turned to law, and the public was duly informed that he will "attend to law business at his chambers at Mrs. Doynes's on Pennsylvania Avenue any time of the morning before nine o'clock and at any time after three o'clock.[4] A weekly literary paper called the *Hive*, or repository of literature, the first journal of the kind published in Washington, was proposed by H. C. Lewis the last month in 1810.[5] A year later a similar publication was started under the auspices of Joseph Milligen, a Georgetown bookseller. His paper was monthly, and was called the *Literary Visitor*.[6]

The rapidity with which newspapers appeared and then disappeared is graphically shown by comparing the list given by Isaiah Thomas in his History of Printing, of papers published in Washington and Georgetown in 1810 with those named by Warden a year later. According to Thomas the papers were the *Intelligencer*, the *Monitor* and the *Independent American*, triweeklies and the *Spirit of Seventy-Six*, semi-weekly and the *Universal Gazette*, the weekly edition of the *Intelligencer*.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 4, 1809. [2] The same, Jan. 16, 1810.

[3] *Federal Republican*, Sept. 4, 1812.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 3, 1811. Before coming to Washington about the year 1804 Mr. Colvin was editor in the year 1800 of the *Daily Advertiser* of Baltimore and three years later began the publication in Hagerstown of the *Republican Advocate*, both Republican organs.

[5] The same, Dec. 20, 1810. Warden, p. 84, describes it as having eight quarto pages. "It contains selections from books and journals and some original articles which are indeed original." The first number was issued in April, 1811. Prospectus in *Intelligencer*, Jan. 24, 1811.

[6] The same, April 29, 1813. Contents given for March, 1813, Vol. 2, No. 1. Mr. Milligan began in January, 1811, the publication of a quarterly entitled *American Review of History and Politics*. William Cooper, who was associated with Dinmore in the issue of the *Expositor*, had a book store in Washington.

Warden notes that the *Intelligencer* and the weekly *Hive* were the only papers published in Washington and the *Spirit of Seventy-Six* in Georgetown. He omits to mention the weekly edition of the *Intelligencer*.

When Madison's first term was nearly completed, and before the dissatisfaction with "Madison's war," which was declared in the summer of 1812, had aroused to an unusual degree partisan bitterness, announcement was made that the Federalist party was again to be represented at the nation's capital by a newspaper organ. The middle of the first month of the year 1812 was fixed in the proposals issued by James A. Bayard, Jr., for beginning the publication of a tri-weekly that was to advocate the policy of Washington.[1] As far as known this announcement is all that has been preserved of this newspaper venture. The events of the succeeding six months, as they rapidly followed each other, changed radically the situation. For near the close of the session of congress which continued to the 6th of July, 1812, war was declared against England. In the first few months it was Madison's war, a war of the Republican party reflecting French influence, and the Federal party was arrayed against it. One of the organs of that party, the *Federal Republican*, a weekly published in Baltimore, had so stirred partisan feeling by its violent attacks on the policy of the administration that a couple of weeks after war was declared the office of the paper was attacked by a mob and destroyed. Nothing daunted, one of the owners of the paper, Jacob Wagner, who after a long service as chief clerk of the department of state had lost his office under Madison, and the editor, Alexander C. Hanson, decided to resume the publication of the paper. Accordingly a little more than a month later the paper again appeared, but this time from an office at M and 30th streets, Georgetown, "where the government could be made directly responsible in case of further violence."[2] The papers when printed were taken to Baltimore for

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 19, 1811.

[2] Adams's History, Vol. 6, p. 409. *Intelligencer*, Aug. 1, 1812. "On Monday [July 27] was resumed at Baltimore and Georgetown in the District at one and the same time, the publication of a newspaper called the *Federal Republican*, etc."

distribution. Realizing there would be opposition a number of the friends of the editor, all strong Federalists, under command of the old revolutionary soldiers James M. Lingan and "Light Horse Harry" Lee armed themselves and assembled in the house of Wagner, from which the papers were distributed. The mob again appeared, and in the rioting that took place Mr. Lingan and others were killed and General Lee was severely injured.

On the day following the resumption of the publication a call was issued for a meeting of Republicans of Washington disposed to assist in the establishment of a newspaper "to inspire energy, produce union and aid in support of the last and best measures of the administration."[1] As there is no further reference to this proposed enterprise it may be inferred that one purpose at least was to discourage the publication of the anti-Federal organ in the District. It was not merely in the Baltimore affair that a veteran revolutionary soldier, who was highly esteemed, had fallen a victim in defence of his principles, but the action of the mob was branded as an assault upon the liberty of the press. The affair assumed national proportions.[2]

Subscriptions poured into the Georgetown office from the Federalists throughout the country, and what had been up to that time an unprofitable financial venture began to prosper, and in the course of about a year instead of a tri-weekly issue it became a daily. No change was made in its policy or in its language. The criticism of the administration was unwearied and merciless. The editor also profited personally, as that fall he was chosen to represent in congress the district in Maryland including Montgomery and Frederick counties, succeeding Philip Barton Key. At the close of his first term he took his seat in the United States senate. Mr. Hanson's residence was in Rockville, Md., but when he entered the senate in 1816, he removed the publication office of his paper from Georgetown to Baltimore, where he also made his home.[3]

[1] *Intelligencer*, July 28, 1812.

[2] "In the north and the east the murder of Lingan shook the foundations of society." Adams's History, Vol. 6, p. 408.

[3] The first issue in Baltimore was April 6, 1816. *Intelligencer*, April 11,

Partisan feeling was displayed in the District when the paper first appeared. Rumors were circulated of an intention of the men employed at the navy yard to destroy the office, which was indignantly denied by the editor of the *Intelligencer* as well as by the men themselves.[1] The secretary of the navy, however, for fear the scenes in Baltimore might be repeated, went to the navy yard and spoke in favor of peace and good conduct. The rumored attack was not made. The influence of the administration was exerted to prevent further scenes of violence. The excited partisans calmed down and a bloodless contest of words followed. The two factions in Georgetown held public meetings and adopted resolutions.[2] But the Federalists did not content themselves with adopting resolutions. They decided upon paying funeral honors to the memory of Mr. Lingan, who for many years was a citizen of Georgetown. The day fixed upon was the first of September, more than a month after the tragedy which had resulted in his death. A printed circular, giving the proposed arrangements and the order of the procession, was issued. President Madison at once sent an order to the army and navy officers, and through the secretary of war to the commanding general of the District militia that it would be improper for any of the corps under their command to take part in a military capacity, "as it would be wanting in respect to the laws before which the entire case now rests for enquiry and decision."[3] As the editor of the *Intelligencer* remarked in commenting on the matter, a place had been assigned in this procession for the survivors of the party who were in the house when attacked by the mob, and the grand jury of Baltimore had indicted these men for manslaughter while charging with murder the members of the mob that later on made the murderous attack on the jail where the besieged had been taken for safety.

1816, advertisement of J. C. Dunn, announcing the publication of the *Messenger*, thus providing Georgetown with a newspaper after the removal of the *Federal Republican*.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 6, 1812.

[2] The same, Aug. 18, 1812. *Federal Republican*, Aug. 12, 1812. Reprinted from the *Spirit of Seventy-Six*.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 3, 1812.

A place was also assigned in the procession for a hearse, but it did not contain the body as that had been given to a relative for secret burial.[1]

In the procession which started from the Union Tavern a place was provided for the widow. But on the morning of that day some man whose party passion had gotten the best of his humanity, carrying a bloody spear and wearing a military cap inscribed Federal Republican, paraded before the hotel as a reminder to the afflicted woman of the event which had deprived her of her husband. Mrs. Lingan was so overcome by the memories which this spectacle recalled that she was obliged to give up all thought of attending the services. Owing, it was stated, to the large number who wished to pay this tribute to the memory of the dead, it was decided to hold the services in Parrott's wood instead of in St. John's Church. There the Washington tent was erected and to the strains of a funeral dirge and the booming of minute guns from a new ship in the harbor owned by Washington Bowie, a Georgetown merchant, and named the General Lingan, the march was made up the hill. A troop of horse and a rifle company, both independent organizations, and not subject to the orders of the militia commander, were in line. The oration was delivered by George Washington Parke Custis, and the order of the day was carried out without any further display of the intense public feeling that prevailed.[2] For the Georgetown community as a whole was not in sympathy with the opposition to the administration, as was clearly brought out in the city election, for the Democrats were in control of the city council and the only reason the minority had any representation at all was because the Democrats voted for two

[1] The interment was finally made in the grounds about the home of the deceased on the Foxall Road, a short distance north of the Conduit Road. In 1903 a bronze marker was placed at the grave by the Dolly Madison Chapter, D. A. R., and in 1908 the remains were transferred to the national cemetery at Arlington. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 13, p. 47.

[2] Oration by Mr. Custis of Arlington, etc. Washington, 1812, p. 5. Francis Scott Key, "a Federal lawyer," was asked to deliver the oration but declined. *Federal Republican*, Sept. 2 and 4, 1812.

Federal candidates for the first chamber and four for the lower in order "to promote harmony and not exclude the other side entirely."[1] The agitation had hardly died away when the news was received from the remote frontier of northern Michigan, so unexpected and so humiliating to American pride, of the surrender at Detroit of General William Hull. The recruiting for the army and the volunteering of the militia and their equipment by the citizens, which had not enlisted a very general response became more active. The military bustle as well as the eagerness for news from the Canadian frontier led the editors of the *Intelligencer* to decide to issue a daily paper, while continuing the tri-weekly edition.[2] Hardly a year had passed since Washington had a daily newspaper when a prospectus was issued announcing the purpose of giving to the city what it never had before, a daily evening paper.[3] It was to be known as the *Washington City Gazette* and was to be Republican in politics. The publisher was William Elliot, later on surveyor of the city; the printer, Jonathan Elliot; and the editor, George Watterston. The latter was the only literary man resident in Washington now that Joel Barlow was no more.[4] The first number appeared the first week in 1814.[5] No file of this period has been preserved, but it may be concluded that it was continued up to the time of the invasion of the city, as an article

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 3, 1814.

[2] The same, Nov. 17, 1812. The first issue as announced was on the 1st of January, 1813. About the same time the *Federal Republican* in Georgetown became a daily.

[3] The same, Dec. 2, 1813.

[4] Mr. Watterston was born in the harbor of New York, Oct. 23, 1783. His father, David Watterston, a native of Jedburgh, Scotland, had just arrived in this country. He removed to Washington, where he was employed on the capitol building. His son witnessed the laying of the corner-stone of that edifice in 1793. George Watterston studied law and formed a partnership with Thomas Law.

His taste inclined to letters rather than to law, and he wrote much, but did not display talents of a high order. History of Library of Congress, Vol. 1, p. 108.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 4, 1814. According to this announcement the first issue was January 5. Also announcement of the second issue in the *Intelligencer*, January 6.

from its columns was reprinted in a Philadelphia paper referring to an event of August 22.[1] It is probable before this date, the paper was changed to a weekly, as when it was revived nearly two years later, Jonathan Elliot, who was then the publisher and editor, informed the public that "the *Washington Weekly Gazette* will be resumed."[2] Several months before the daily *Washington City Gazette* appeared, its publisher had formed a partnership with Daniel Rapine to do a printing business on Capitol Hill.[3] It may be concluded the new newspaper venture was published in that section of the city. Mr. Rapine had just completed a term as mayor of the city, the first to serve under the city charter of 1812, which changed the office from a presidential appointment to an elective office by the city council. For seven years Mr. Rapine had been alone in the management of the book selling and stationery business at the northeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and B Street, S. E., which he and his partners established the year the government was removed to the new city. Six years later his partners Michael and John Conrad, Philadelphia booksellers, withdrew from the business.[4] When the publication of the *Gazette* was resumed as a weekly, the office was on Pennsylvania Avenue between 4½ and 6th streets, where Mr. Rapine gave notice he had removed his stationery store.[5] He was a near neighbor of Roger C. Weightman who had bought out the book and stationery store of William Duane at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 6th Street.

A few weeks prior to the notice of the publication of an evening paper the public was informed by Ebenezer H. Cummins that he proposed to publish a tri-weekly newspaper which would be devoted exclusively to reporting the proceedings of the senate.[6]

[1] Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 26, 1814.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 7, 1815. In the library of congress the file is Nov. 25, 1815, to Oct. 18, 1817.

[3] The same, July 13, 1813.

[4] The same, Feb. 5, 1806.

[5] The same Nov. 1, 1814. In the course of a year the business was again on Capitol Hill, on East Capitol Street between 1st and 2d streets. Same, Dec. 11, 1815.

[6] The same, Nov. 25, 1813.

The publication was begun at the opening of the session of congress the following month, and was continued apparently through that session, which ended in April, 1814.[1] How faithfully the editor confined himself to the special line he had laid down, is indicated by a notice to newspaper publishers that he could not exchange papers "as he has no use for the material in their columns."[2] Another special publication which has the distinction of being the first agricultural journal published in this country was the *Agricultural Museum*, a bi-monthly. The initial number appeared from the printing office of W. A. Rind in Georgetown, July 4, 1810. As the files show, it was well edited, and entirely devoted to an intelligent treatment of the subject. The editor, David Wiley, had been educated as a minister and had come to Georgetown ten years previously and had taken charge of the Columbian Academy. A year after the *Museum* appeared, he was elected mayor of Georgetown.[3] He was also secretary of the Columbian Agricultural Society, organized for the purpose of encouraging agriculture and domestic manufactures. The first exhibition under the auspices of the society had been held in May, 1810, and the next the following fall. Union Tavern was the scene of this gathering of farmers and manufacturers, where the exhibits were examined and the premiums awarded. The latter were provided from the annual dues of $10 paid by the one hundred and thirty members.

So successful were these events that in the second year the May exhibition took place in "the pleasant grove the property of Thomas Beall of George, Esq., adjoining Mr. Parrott's rope walk."[4]

How long the agricultural society and its newspaper organ

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 1, 1814. [2] The same.

[3] The mayors of Georgetown for the period 1797 to 1818 were as follows: Lloyd Beall, 1798–1802; Daniel Reintzell, 1803–1807; Thomas Corcoran, 1808–1810; David Wiley, 1811; Thomas Corcoran, 1812; John Peter, 1813–1818.

[4] *Agricultural Museum*, May 22, 1811. *Intelligencer*, May 14, 1811. "The woods at the head of Washington Street," or 30th Street of to-day, still remain within the enclosure of Oak Hill Cemetery, while the site of the rope walk to the west is now a public park.

continued their useful work is not known,[1] but it seems probable these exhibitions suffered the fate of many of the activities of a peaceful society in the wave of war that overspread the country.

The agricultural society was not the only agency that was striving to improve the condition of the farmer in this locality. Since the spring of 1803, soon after George Washington Parke Custis, the grandson of Mrs. George Washington, established his home at Arlington which he inherited from his father, and began the erection of the house with its pillared porch that still adorns the brow of the hill overlooking the Potomac from the Virginia shore, the Arlington Sheep Shearing, as the annual convention for the promotion of agriculture and domestic manufactures was called, became an occasion of interest each recurring spring. The distribution of prizes, the gift of Mr. Custis, took place in the tent used by Washington during the revolutionary war, and there also a dinner was served by the generous host.[2]

Mr. Custis' enthusiasm as to the possibilities of improvement in the use of land led him to publish an address in pamphlet form on this subject to the people of the United States.[3] The previous year a pamphlet had come from the District press on a special horticultural subject relating to the use of the young thorn and other hedge plants.[4] The author, Thomas Main, had a nursery near the Little Falls.[5]

[1] The last date of the file of the *Agricultural Museum* in the library of congress is May, 1812. In the issue of the *Intelligencer* of Nov. 12, 1812, is a notice of the autumnal exhibition of the society for that year.

[2] Oration by Mr. Custis of Arlington with an account of the funeral solemnities in honor of the lamented General James M. Lingan, p. 34. Washington, 1812.

[3] Alexandria, S. Snowden, 1808.

[4] The title was Directions for the transplantation and management of young thorn, etc. Thomas Main, Washington, A. and G. Way, 1807. Advertisement by the executor of the estate of Mr. Main in issue of Feb. 15, 1814, offering the plants and seeds at the nursery for sale.

[5] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 14, 1804. In the issue of Feb. 27, 1805, appears the advertisement of two gardeners or horticulturists, as they would be termed to-day. One of these, Theodore Holt, had a place on the Eastern Branch, while Thomas McGrath was located on Uriah Forrest's farm in the vicinity of Wisconsin Avenue and Massachusetts

Within the city up to the year 1807 David Hepburn, a gardener, occupied a portion of the square bounded by 6th, 7th and B streets and Maryland Avenue, S. W.[1] The record of the rise and decline in the newspaper publishing business in the city finds a further illustration in the history of the printers' trade organization which was designed primarily to raise and establish prices. A year after the initial supply of newspapers at the new political centre had been made in such generous fashion, appeared a call for a meeting of "the journeymen printers of the District of Columbia." The heading of the notice read "Franklin or Asylum association."[2] This was the name of an association or company in Philadelphia that preceded the Philadelphia Typographical Society, organized in November, 1802.[3] As a typographical society had been organized in New York as early as 1795, the Philadelphia organization stands second in point of time, and the Washington society is the third. How long it continued in existence, it is impossible to say, as there is no further reference to the subject for thirteen years, when a notice appeared calling a meeting of the printers of the District "friendly to the organization of a society on principles corresponding to the Philadelphia Typographical Society." In a few weeks the Columbia Typographical Society was organized,[4] so that the year 1815 is given usually as the beginning of organized effort on the part of printers of the District by those who overlook or are not aware of the earlier organization and of the importance of Washington in the opening years of the nineteenth century as a centre of the printing trade.

A year before the printers formed this second association the

Avenue. The latter offered shade trees and flowers for sale, and stated he had poplar trees for sale at 12 cents each. In the issue of Dec. 10, 1814, is an advertisement by Isaac Peirce, offering for sale 20,000 engrafted apple trees "at his nursery three miles from Georgetown on Rock Creek." The house built of stone where Mr. Peirce lived is now in Rock Creek Park, on the west side of the creek between Klingle Road and Pierce Mill Road.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Jan. 10, 1807. [2] The same, Nov. 2, 1801.

[3] The Printers. George E. Barnett. American Economic Association. 3d Series, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1909.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 3 and Jan. 12, 1815.

bricklayers organized an association "to establish uniform mode of measurement and prices."[1] It is evident an advance of wages was contemplated, as a few days later the writer of a communication in the *Intelligencer*[2] suggested that such a course might not be wise at this time, for he adds, "Is it not well known to all of us that the prices of the latter (the bricklayers) have already been much complained of here, and that whole corps of mechanics who have ascertained the prices of work in this place are ready in one or two of our large towns to pour in among us upon slight invitation and encouragement?"

There is no record of what this pioneer labor organization accomplished, but it is evident that conditions had materially changed since the period of the city commissioners and their rather autocratic method of dealing with labor questions. In another particular of associated effort on the part of citizens the course of development of the community may be traced in the growth of church organizations. For the first five or six years of Washington as the national capital, but few changes in the material condition of the churches occurred, and no additions were made to the number. In fact, the active existence of one church, St. Andrews Presbyterian, in the vicinity of 10th and F streets, N. W., had come to an end. Services under the auspices of the Associated Reformed Church, a branch of the Scotch Presbyterian church that used in singing exclusively the psalms of David, were held each Sabbath in the corridor of the treasury building for a period of seven years. About the close of the second year, the congregation felt justified in having a pastor, instead of depending upon the services of ministers who happened to be available. In the spring of 1803 Rev. James Laurie, a Scotchman twenty five years of age, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh who had just arrived in this country, accepted a call.[3] The congregation, which was described by

[1] *Intelligencer*, Feb. 22, 1814. The committee appointed to draw up rules and regulations was composed as follows: William Diggs, Ambrose White, John Queen, George Craig and James Bennett.

[2] Feb. 26, 1814.

[3] The call was signed by Joseph Nourse, and William Brown, ruling elders, William Mackey, Melchior Steiner, John McGowan,

Rev. Manasseh Cutler some eight months after Mr. Laurie had become the pastor "as small but attentive and serious," [1] was evidently unable to provide for the entire support of a minister, as Mr. Laurie secured a position in the treasury office. An earnest effort was made to have a church building, and in behalf of this object Mr. Laurie travelled throughout the country soliciting funds, the first appeal of the sort for Washington as a national centre. By the year 1807 a small church building of brick was erected on the south side of F Street, a short distance west of 14th Street, on a portion of the site now occupied by 1414 F Street, and in the middle of July it was occupied for the first time.[2] The original church building was small, and was without the extension to the street front and the pillared porch of latter days, but it was notable as the second church edifice in the city made of more enduring material than wood, as it may be inferred that the Baptist Church erected in 1803 was of brick. The church, however, had a struggling career, and its continued existence at times seemed doubtful. By the year 1819 twenty-one families were connected with it and the entire membership was sixty-one.[3] A year after Mr. Laurie had been installed, and while St. Andrews Church that was affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in this country had apparently died, an attempt was made to ascertain what support would be given to a Presbyterian Church on Capitol Hill. Beyond the call for a meeting to be held at Stelle's Tavern [4] there is no record that anything further was done at that time, or in fact until the spring of 1809, when a petition was received by the Presbytery of Baltimore from Presbyterians about the navy yard, asking for the services of a Presbyterian minister. During the preceding summer, as the

Michael Nourse, Samuel Collingwood, Lewis Clephane, George Mitchell, George Kennedy, Alexander McDonald and Alexander Mackey, members of the church and others who were not members. From a history of the church in the manuscript records of the session under date of April 22, 1824.

[1] Life, Vol. 2.

[2] *Intelligencer*, July 15, 1807. Notice of the opening of the church and that the pews remaining undisposed of will be rented.

[3] Records of the Session.

[4] *Intelligencer*, May 30, 1804.

record shows, ministers had officiated at this station. Rev. John Brackinridge, the first and only pastor of St. Andrews Church, was sent as a missionary, and by the fall of 1811 the intention was announced of calling him as pastor. The new congregation purchased lot 13, Square 636, at the southwest corner of South Capitol and B streets, S. W., and by June, 1812, a church building of frame was erected on that site and public notice was given of "the distribution of pews in the First Presbyterian Church." [1] In this particular the general custom of the locality was followed. A different plan was adopted by the vestry of Christ Church. The pews were sold, the purchaser holding his pew in fee, transferable at his pleasure, but subject to such yearly rents as might be determined upon from time to time by the vestry.[2] It was at a meeting held in the First Presbyterian Church that the Bible Society of the District of Columbia was organized on the 17th day of January, 1813, by representatives of different religious denominations.[3]

The earliest mention of Washington in the minutes of the Methodist conference was in the year 1802, when it is given in the list of appointments in connection with Georgetown.[4] The minister in charge of the two stations preached in Washington one Sabbath in three, returning to Georgetown for the night preaching.[5] The first known place of Methodist preaching in

[1] *Intelligencer*, June 23, 1812. Rev. John Brackinridge was installed as pastor on Sabbath, July 4, 1813. See also Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 8, p. 43.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Aug. 19, 1807.

[3] The same, Jan. 25, 1814. Also first report of the Bible Society of the District of Columbia (Washington), 1816. The managers were Rev. James Muir, D.D., of Alexandria, president; Rev. James Laurie, D.D., and Rev. Walter D. Addison, vice-presidents; Rev. Stephen B. Balch and Rev. William H. Wilmer, corresponding secretaries; Thomas Vowell, treasurer; Elias B. Caldwell, recording secretary; Revs. Andrew Hunter, John Chalmers, Obadiah B. Brown, Henry Foxall, and Oliver Norris; John McGowan, John Coyle, John Laird, Francis S. Key, Robert Munro, John McDaniel, Bushrod Washington, Jacob Hoffman and Dr. George A. Thornton.

[4] The Washington society was represented on the official board of the Georgetown Church by Joseph Wheat, Peter Miller, John Chalmers, George Collard and James Fry.

[5] "The friends at the Point agree to pay one third of his salary and one fourth of his boarding, making in all $68." Resolution adopted

Washington was one of the Twenty Buildings at South Capitol and N streets. When in the summer of 1807 the congregation of Washington parish gave up the old tobacco warehouse on New Jersey Avenue, south of D Street, which had been used for church purposes since the formation of the parish in 1795, and took possession of the new church edifice which had just been erected on G Street between 6th and 7th streets, S. E.,[1] the Methodist congregation removed to the vacated building. At that time the membership was 102.[2] In the course of three years a lot was purchased from William Prout on the east side of 4th Street, between Potomac, formerly Georgia Avenue, and G Street, S. E.[3] A church building of small dimensions and of brick was erected on this lot and dedicated in November, 1811. At this period the membership had risen to 159. The interior of the building was not completed for some years. There were no pews, and benches, chairs and stools were brought to the church by the worshippers. As was the custom in the early days of Methodism, a partition four feet high ran down the centre of the auditorium, one side being reserved for the men and the other for the women.

In the same general locality as early as 1801 ground was acquired on the east side of South Capitol Street, between N and O streets, for the purpose of erecting there a Catholic Church, and it was probably this site Father Grassi, Superior of the Jesuits in Maryland, had in mind when he wrote in 1818,

by the trustees and official members, April 7, 1803. Centennial sketch of Methodism in Georgetown, p. 24. Washington, 1884.

[1] In proposals for building a Protestant Episcopal Church on Square 877, signed by Henry Ingle, register, *Intelligencer*, May 28, 1806, the building is described to be of brick "38 × 45 feet in the clear and two stories high." Same, Aug. 5, 1807. Rev. A. T. McCormick will commence holding divine service on Sunday, the 9th inst., "in the new church near the Navy Yard." It then was given the name of Christ Church.

[2] History of the Church. Rev. W. M. Ferguson. *Evening Star*, Feb. 13, 1892.

[3] The members of the board of trustees at this time were Henry Foxall, John Brashears, Electius Middleton, Ambrose White, James Vanganette, John A. Chambers, Leonard Mackall, John Eliason and Jacob Hoffman.

describing church conditions in Washington, "some years ago the foundations for a cathedral were laid, but the building had to be suspended for want of funds." [1] Five years later the corner-stone of St. Mary's Catholic Church, sometimes known as Barry's Chapel, was laid. Both the ground and the building were the gift of James Barry, who was actively engaged in commercial enterprises in that part of the city, and the beauty of whose daughter aroused the enthusiastic admiration of Augustus Foster, the young secretary of the English legation.[2] The chapel building was located on the west side of $\frac{1}{2}$ Street, between O and P streets, S. E., and was standing as late as the year 1819.[3]

A year before the Methodists took possession of the old tobacco house, the society in Georgetown enlarged the brick church building which had been erected on the lot on the east side of 28th Street between M and Olive streets. The original building was $30 \times 40$ feet, and in the year 1806 it was lengthened to sixty feet, and was made two stories high.[4] Three years previously the need of church privileges for those of the Episcopal faith, somewhat more convenient than found at such a distance from Georgetown as the church of Washington parish and of Rock Creek Church, became so urgent that the Episcopalians of Georgetown were called together at Semmes Tavern and a committee was appointed to solicit funds for completing the partially built church structure at the southeast corner of O and Potomac streets.[5] It is apparent that contributions were sought to some extent outside of the District by written appeals.

[1] Memorial of St. Patrick's Church (1904), pp. 10 and 15.

[2] The Two Duchesses, p. 198.

[3] *Intelligencer*, May 8, 1819. In Pictures of the City of Washington, S. C. Busey, p. 140, is given the inscription on the corner-stone which is preserved in St. Dominic's Church. An account of a romance in connection with this chapel may be found in the Washington Sketch Book, p. 207.

[4] Centennial Sketch of Methodism in Georgetown. Washington, 1884.

[5] A sermon giving a historical account of St. John's Church, Georgetown, by Rev. C. M Butler, Washington, 1844. The committee was Walter S. Chandler, Charles Worthington and Walter Smith.

At any rate, before the year had closed the building was in condition to be used. In the following spring Rev. John J. Sayrs of Port Tobacco parish was chosen rector by the pewholders. In the year 1806 the church building was completely finished.[1] Upon the death of the rector in 1809, Rev. Walter D. Addison, who had been active in the first period of the church, was called to the rectorship. In that year Georgetown Parish was created out of the Washington Parish, and the church was consecrated.[2] The Baptist congregation, which had a church building at the southwest corner of 19th and I streets, N. W., since the year 1803 shared in the general improvement which may be noted in the material condition of the churches in the years 1806–1807, and for the first time in its existence since the spring of 1802 called a pastor. Rev. Obadiah B. Brown of New Jersey was the choice of the congregation that then numbered twenty-three souls. He entered upon his duties as pastor Feb. 21, 1807. He also, like Dr. Laurie and Rev. Mr. McCormick, Rector of Christ Church, held a clerkship in the government service.[3]

Two years after Mr. Brown began his services, the church was supplied for the first time with pews which were at once offered for rent.[4]

Nearly three years after the commencement of the pastoral services of Mr. Brown the Second or Navy Yard Church was constituted, with five members.[5] The church came into

[1] The trustees in 1804 were William H. Dorsey, Charles Worthington, Thomas Corcoran, Walter S. Chandler and Walter Smith.

[2] Historical Sermon by Rev. Charles E. Buck. Washington, 1896.

[3] History of Baptist Institutions of Washington City, p. 7. Washington, 1867.

[4] *Intelligencer*, July 7, 1809. The issue of March 22, 1814, contains a notice signed by O. B. Brown, president, and Eno Reynolds, corresponding secretary of the Washington Baptist Society for foreign missions, urging the formation of societies and the sending of delegates to Philadelphia "where a general committee is to be formed to unite the counsels, contributions and energies of all the societies." At that time the General Convention of Baptists for foreign missions was organized.

[5] Bartleson Fox, Clement Boswell, Harvey Bestor, Joseph Borrows and Sarah Borrows. History of the Baptist Institutions of Washington City, p. 11.

existence on the 3d of June, 1810, and for the first few months services were held in the schoolroom of John McLeod on the west side of 8th Street, a short distance north of I Street, and opposite the Marine barracks. By September, 1810, a small frame building had been erected near the corner of 4th and G streets, S. E., which was occupied by the congregation. A year later the attendance at a communion numbered twenty-three, which indicates the slow growth, and further explains the failure to have a regular pastor. It was not until nine years after the church was organized that the services of a pastor were secured. The pulpit was occupied by ministers who happened to be available. In the year 1814, Spencer H. Cone, whose course at Princeton College had been brought to an end by his father's failing health and who had become a teacher and then an actor and finally the publisher of the *Baltimore Whig*, was again thrown on his own resources by the failure of his newspaper enterprise. He had in that year been converted and immersed. He secured a clerkship in the treasury office, and upon his removal to Washington began to conduct services in the Second Baptist Church. He developed attractive powers as a public speaker, and it being known that a converted actor was preaching the gospel, many people were drawn to the little church. He was soon licensed to preach. He was elected chaplain of the house in 1815, succeeding the Rev. O. B. Brown. After a service of about a year with the Washington Church he accepted a call as pastor of the Baptist Church in Alexandria.[1]

The frame building on the north side of F Street, between 9th and 10th streets, which had served the purposes of St. Patrick's Catholic Church for some thirteen years had become inadequate, and in the latter part of June, 1809, a new building was dedicated, Archbishop John Carroll officiating.[2] The new structure of brick was continued in use for a good many years and stood nearer 9th Street than 10th Street.

It will be noted that the period of 1801–1813 in the case of the churches was one of development and expansion. For at

[1] American Pulpit, Baptist. W. B. Sprague, p. 642.
[2] *Intelligencer*, June 30, 1809.

the beginning there were three church organizations, only one of which owned the building which it occupied, while twelve years later there were seven churches and a chapel, all of which owned the buildings which were used for the services. While in most instances the congregations were small in numbers and limited in resources, yet on the whole the church expansion reflected the growth of the community as well as its material condition. With but a single exception during this period no new denomination entered the field. In the year 1808 a Society of Friends purchased two lots on the north side of I Street between 18th and 19th streets.[1] A meeting-house was erected, and there in June was witnessed "the first marriage solemnized by that society in the city of Washington."[2] Some four years previously Rev. Mr. Hargrove, minister of the New Jerusalem Church, delivered a discourse at the capitol,[3] and after this first mention of the presentation of the doctrines of the followers of Swedenborg, a number of years elapsed before there is any further record made of their activities in this city.

At the same time the speaker's desk in the hall of the house of representatives Sunday after Sunday was a forum from which was presented a wide range of religious belief. The chaplains of congress officiated there, as did also ministers representing various denominations. Frequently the religious atmosphere was lacking, sometimes due to the audience turning the occasion into a social function and then again to the eccentric character and views of the preachers. Rev. Manasseh Cutler was not pleased with the discourse of Rev. John Leland, who arrived in the city January, 1802, with the mammoth cheese which was presented to President Jefferson. On the following day he officiated at the capitol. The president was in the congregation, as it was his custom to be in the early years of his administration. It was apparently a new feature of the capitol services when in February, 1805, the Marine Band was sta-

[1] The deed was dated Feb. 27, 1808, Lib. T, fol. 349, and transferred the lots still used for that purpose to trustees of the society as follows: William Morgan, Isaac Briggs, Gerard Brooke, Samuel Lukens, and Samuel Snowden.

[2] *Intelligencer*, June 3, 1808.

[3] The same, Dec. 24, 1804.

tioned in the gallery and "after the preaching . . . the marines . . . played Denmark. Were there next Sunday. Two pieces of psalmody by the band of the marine corps. They attended in their uniforms about eighty or one hundred." [1] The following fall the *Constitution* arrived from the Mediterranean, having on board the members "of the elegant, Italian band." [2] These musicians became a part of the band of the marine corps in Washington, and their descendants have been ever since identified with that organization.

The early custom of graveyards about the church building found examples in the Presbyterian and Lutheran churches in Georgetown and in St. Patrick's Church in Washington. Family graveyards in the vicinity of the houses were not uncommon, but the modern usage, which requires these resting places of the dead to be some distance from the built-up portions of the town, finds an early counterpart in the provision in the deed executed in 1800 transferring the title of the site for the Methodist Church of Georgetown, that no interments should be made in the ground thus conveyed. The yard about the Presbyterian Church continued for some years after this time to be used for such purposes. The first death in the new city of a member of congress occurred March 11, 1802, when Naisworthy Hunter, a delegate from the territory of Mississippi, passed away. The members of the two houses of congress, their officers and the heads of departments walked in procession from the house where he died, one of the Six Buildings at Pennsylvania Avenue and 21st Street, to Georgetown, "where he was buried in the yard by Mr. Balch's meeting-house." [3] On the occasion of Representative Daniel Heister's death two years later both houses of congress adjourned to attend the funeral, which was held at Lovell's Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue near 15th Street, where he died. Biscuits and wine were served at the hotel for the refreshment of the members of congress who attended, and this expense, as well as the crape bands which each member wore for a month and all other

[1] Life of Manasseh Cutler, Vol. 2, p. 183.
[2] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 25, 1805. [3] Cutler's Life, Vol. 2, p. 104.

items connected with the funeral were paid from the contingent fund of the house, of which the deceased had been a member. On this occasion the members of the two houses walked in procession "from Lovell's Hotel round the President's Square," and from that point the body was taken on through Georgetown to Hagerstown, where the deceased had lived.[1] A year later, according to the same authority, on a similar occasion, the members of the two houses instead of walking rode in carriages from the capitol to the late residence and thence to the grave. At the house wine, spirits and biscuit were provided as a part of the cost of the funeral, all of which was paid from the public funds. The following year, when James Gillespie of North Carolina, member of the house, died, the interment was made in the new burying ground in Georgetown.[2]

This was the Presbyterian cemetery which had been acquired in part in 1802 and eventually included the whole of the southern portion of the square on the north side of Volta Street, between 33d and 34th streets.[3] It is apparent that burials in the church yard ceased when the new cemetery came into use. It was not until the year 1810 that the authorities of St. Patrick's church found it necessary to make other provision for interment than the space about the church building. In that year ground was acquired north of Florida Avenue between 1st and 2d streets, N. W., where the dead of the parish were laid away.

The city burying grounds, squares 109 and 1026, which had been set aside from the government holdings two years before Washington became the national capitol, were under the control of the city council.[4] It was not until the year 1807 that

[1] Cutler's Life, Vol. 2, p. 169, March 8, 1804.

[2] The same, Jan. 11, 1805.

[3] Lib. H, fol. 560. Sept. 28, 1802. Charles Beatty to Stephen B. Balch, Thomas Corcoran, George Thompson, William Whann, James Melvin, John Crookshank, James Calder, Christian Kurtz, John Peter, David English and Henry Knowles in trust for the use of the Presbyterian church of Georgetown. The property now belongs to the District and is used as a public play ground.

[4] Square 109 was bounded by 19th, 20th and S streets, and Florida Avenue, N. W., known for many years as Holmead Cemetery. Square 1026 was bounded by H, I and 15th streets and Florida Avenue, N. E.

any attempt was made to give them proper care. At that time an appropriation was made for putting up post and rail fences, sextons were appointed and it was directed that plots be made.[1] Interments had been made in both places prior to this time, but owing to the fact that the eastern burying ground was in "a low and watery situation and very unfit for a place of interment," [2] a few persons, on April 4, 1807, purchased square No. 1115, between E and G, 18th and 19th streets, S. E., for a cemetery. It was agreed by the purchasers that when the property became free of debt it should be transferred to the vestry of Washington parish.[3] The cemetery continued under the management of the trustees for five years, and then, the condition of the terms of the purchase having been complied with, the property was transferred to the vestry of Washington parish.[4] As soon as this new burial place had been secured, members of congress dying in Washington were interred there. The first burial of a public man in the new cemetery was on the occasion of the death of Senator Uriah Tracy of Connecticut in July, 1807.

There was no amusement more popular than horse racing, and Washington from an early period was a centre of such sport, due no doubt to the interest taken in the breeding of racing stock by John Tayloe, reputed to be the wealthiest man in the city, and one of whose farms, Petworth, was bounded on the south by Rock Creek Church Road and on the west by Georgia Avenue. He was said in 1803 to have received as high as $3500 for one of his winning horses. In that year the races were held on the grounds of the Washington Jockey Club, "about four miles from Capitol Hill." [5] It is evident the first race track,

[1] *Intelligencer*, April 10 and Sept. 11, 1807.

[2] History of the Congressional Cemetery. 59th Cong., 2d Sess., Senate Doc., No. 72, 1906.

[3] Among the purchasers were Henry Ingle, George Blagden, Griffith Coombe, S. N. Smallwood, Dr. Frederick May, Peter Miller, John T. Frost and Captain Thomas Tingey.

[4] Henry Ingle to the vestry of Washington parish, Lib. A, C, fol. 245. March 30, 1812.

[5] Dr. Mitchell's Letters. *Harper's*. April, 1879.

between 17th and 20th streets, and extending across Pennsylvania Avenue into Lafayette Park, had been given up. It seems probable the new track was where it remained for a good many years, south of Columbia Road between 14th and 16th streets. The racing began each year in November on Tuesday and ended on Saturday and some years lasted only three days with a race ball at one of the taverns. The spectators in November, 1803, when Rev. Mr. Cutler attended, as he noted in his journal, were between "three and four thousand, black, white, and yellow; of all conditions from the President of the United States to the beggar in his rags, of all ages and of both sexes, for I should judge one-third were females. . . . It was said the toll collected from the carriages and horses (people on foot passed free) was $1200."

Both houses of congress adjourned, the senate for three days, but, observes Dr. Mitchell, "not on account of the races but merely to admit a mason to plaster the ceiling of their chamber, which had fallen down a few days before." He adds "the House of Representatives met and adjourned, but you must not suppose this was done to allow the honorable gentlemen to show themselves on the horse ground, you are rather to imagine that no business was in due state of preparation to be acted upon."

Both Rev. Mr. Cutler and John Quincy Adams, who were from New England, where horse racing was unknown, record in their memoirs that they gratified their curiosity by being present. The carriage people, so Mr. Cutler states, were ranged in lines on the outside of the circular track, which was fifty feet wide and one mile in extent. Within the circle was a cluster of wooden refreshment booths having flat roofs from which the people viewed the races. Those on horseback followed the contestants along the course.[1] The sport was not abandoned when the country became involved in war. In the course of a couple of months after war had been declared and congress had appointed a day of humiliation and prayer, the usual fall meeting of the Washington Jockey Club was

[1] Cutler's Life, Vol. 2, p. 142.

held.[1] During this period the citizens of Washington, in common with their fellow-citizens throughout, especially the southern section of the country, where the war was more popular, were enrolling themselves in companies and offering their services to the government in response to the president's call.[2] A renewed interest was manifested in the militia. The celebration of the Fourth of July brought out in the procession that moved from the president's house to the capitol, where Richard Rush delivered an oration, five hundred soldiers of the first legion, "principally in uniform and all well armed, exhibiting a martial appearance."[3] In addition four independent companies were in line.

The spirit of the militia was different in this section from that in New England, where the governors claimed the right to determine on the need of calling out the troops and refused to have them placed under the command of officers of the regular army in case troops were furnished. It was resolved at a meeting of citizens of Washington of forty-five years and upwards to form a company and tender its services to the president.[4] An order was issued from militia headquarters to enrol every man subject to military duty except such as have joined volunteer companies.[5] At a public meeting in Alexandria $2000 was raised for the purpose of equipping a volunteer company,[6] and by the first of the following month a company of sixty men had been accepted by the president. Then Washington was remote from the seat of war. The Canadian border was a long

[1] *Intelligencer*, Nov. 3, 1812. The following fall, when the city was recovering from the terror caused by the coming up the river of the British fleet, the usual announcement of the Jockey Club races appeared. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 26, 1813. In the issue of Nov. 16, 1813, notice was given that a race would be run near the end of the Eastern Branch bridge at the foot of 14th Street, E. Two months after the destructive visit of the British, the usual three-day racing meet was held on the Washington course. *Federal Republican*, Oct. 31, 1814.

[2] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 29, 1812.

[3] The same, July 8, 1812. Mr. Rush was at that time controller of the treasury. Two years later he was attorney-general.

[4] The same, Aug. 8, 1812.

[5] The same, Sept. 8, 1812.

[6] The same, Sept. 10, 1812.

distance off, and to that frontier the hostilities were still confined when James Madison for the second time took the oath of office as president of the United States. The program of four years before was carried out with but few changes. The president was escorted from his official residence, along Pennsylvania Avenue to the capitol by the cavalry of the District, and upon his arrival passed through the ranks of the volunteer companies of Washington, Georgetown and Alexandria. In the radiance of the brilliant sunlight the appearance of the military array was pronounced to be animating.[1] The ceremonies were again held in the chamber of the house, and after the president elect had delivered his inaugural, the oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Marshall in the presence of the members of congress, the justices of the Supreme Court, the foreign ministers and many citizens. Again for the second time the ceremonies of the day were brought to a close by a ball which was held in Davis Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue near 6th Street, N. W.

In the course of a few weeks the war was brought to the very doors of the people of the District. Then an English fleet under the command of Admiral Warren and Rear Admiral Cockburn began a blockade of Chesapeake and Delaware bays. The entire section of country from Richmond to Philadelphia was thrown into a panic of alarm and apprehension, which was increased when, in May, Admiral Cockburn ascended Chesapeake Bay, burning and pillaging Havre de Grace, Georgetown (Maryland) and other places. By that time the District militia had been reorganized, but in addition a mass meeting of citizens was held, as was done in Philadelphia at this time, and a committee was appointed to coöperate with the general government in measures for the defence of the city.[2] At that period, as proved to be the case later, the advisers of the president did not believe the city was in danger. As Mrs. Madison wrote in a personal letter on May 12, 1813, "and now if I could describe the fears and alarms that circulate around us. For the last week all the city and Georgetown (except the cabinet)

[1] *Intelligencer*, March 6, 1813. [2] The same, May 11, 1813.

have expected a visit from the enemy and were not lacking in their expressions of terror and reproach." [1]

Orders, however, were given to repair Fort Washington, showing that this sole defence of the city, erected some four years previously, had not been maintained. Mrs. Madison's eyes were gladdened in looking out of the windows of the president's house to see the tents of the militia on the hill where in later years the Naval Observatory was built. For, as she shrewdly observes, "The twenty tents look well in my eyes, who has always been an advocate for fighting when assailed, though a Quaker." Mrs. Madison at the same time stated that it is rumored the enemy intends to come to the city to burn the president's house and the executive offices. She adds "I do not tremble at this, but feel hurt that the admiral (of Havre de Grace memory) should send me word that he would make his bow at my drawing-room very soon." [2] More than a year elapsed before this prediction, and then only in part, came true; but this early notice, if it had been taken seriously by the military authorities, and politics and personal ambition as well as the meagreness of the public resources had not interfered, would have made the execution of the threat more difficult or probably would have prevented the attempt. However, military companies were enrolled in the District and a force numbering 400 was enlisted in the service of the government. They were placed under the command of Colonel Carbery of the regular army and went into camp as stated by Mrs. Adams.[3] A squadron of cavalry under command of Colonel Tayloe was stationed near the Washington bridge, but in a few days, and in accordance with the economical policy of that time, was released from further service with the commendation of Colonel Carbery for its good conduct.[4] In the course of six weeks after attacking Norfolk without success and seizing and burning Hampton, Virginia, the British fleet began the ascent of the Potomac. By the middle of July the enemy was within sixty miles of the city. When messengers arrived bring-

[1] Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison, p. 90. [2] The same.
[3] *Intelligencer*, May 25, 1813. [4] The same, June 1, 1813.

ing this intelligence, "a reasonable and well-grounded fear took possession of the city," declares the French minister.[1] A few days later he records "every one is making ready to move. I know they are secretly packing up at the departments." He adds, in reference to the defenceless state of the city, that the government had but little means of stopping the hostile approach. By ten o'clock of the morning of the day when the intelligence had been received at daylight, three thousand men were on their way to Fort Washington. This force included all the regular soldiers in camp in the vicinity of the city and nearly all the volunteer companies of Washington and Georgetown.[2] The frigate *Adams* and several gunboats that happened to be at the navy yard for repairs were ordered to the same point. The secretary of the navy, William Jones, was on board the *Adams*, while the secretary of war, John Armstrong, took command of the 600 regular troops that were at the fort. The secretary of state, James Monroe, who was regarded as possessing military ability by a large number, which, however, unfortunately for the harmony and effectiveness of the administration of the war by the president and the cabinet, did not include the secretary of war, went with a troop of cavalry on a scouting trip down the river to observe the movements of the enemy. Both the militia and cavalry parties were accompanied by many members of congress.[3] The two houses were, however, left with a quorum, and after directing a day of prayer went into secret session on the situation.[4]

When the city had been stripped of its able-bodied men, all business ceased, the theatre remained closed and the *Intelligencer*, with both editors gone and most of the printers, appeared in a single sheet instead of two. So disturbed and unsettled

[1] Serurier to Bassano, July 15, 1813. Quoted in Adams's History, Vol. 7, pp. 56–57.

[2] *Intelligencer*, July 16, 1813.

[3] The same, July 16, 1813. Adams, Vol. 7, p. 56.

[4] It was at this time that the military committee of the house, in reply to a resolution from a federal source, setting forth the defenceless situation of the city, brought in a political report that the preparations were in every respect adequate.

was the public mind that on the evening of the day the military left the city, a night watch or police was organized composed of citizens, who volunteered for the service at the request of the mayor. It was the first time in the history of the city such a measure of protection had been resorted to, but it was not entirely a war measure. For two years past the attention of the city council had been called by the mayors in their annual messages to the unsafe condition of the streets at night due to the idle and disorderly persons roaming about at all hours.[1] As it proved, the night watch was only a temporary device. The establishment of a workhouse in the fall of 1813 was followed by an improvement in the good order of the city. As a further means of protection two days after the watch force was established a meeting of the men remaining in the city was held at the capitol and steps taken to form into companies for the defence of the city all men above forty-five years of age. The mayor, Dr. James H. Blake, who had the previous month been elected to that office, was requested, pending the formation of the proposed military companies, to continue the night watch.[2] In the meantime the military forces from the city were encamped about Fort Washington and along the road leading from Piscataway to Port Tobacco, while the secretary of state and his escort of cavalry had pushed down the river, and the next morning while at breakfast in a house near Swans Point on the Maryland side opposite Colonial Beach seven or eight shots were fired at the house from the enemy's vessels in the river. No damage was done, and after taking this satisfaction for the repulse which a landing party had met the previous night from a militia force, and also having taken the soundings of the river and marked the channel, the fleet July 21st dropped down the river and resumed cruising in Chesapeake Bay.[3] For nearly a week the enemy had been within sixty miles of the city. They did not go above Cedar Point on the Maryland side, now known as Lower Cedar Point, a few miles above Colo-

[1] Message of Daniel Rapine. Journal Bd. of Alder., Vol. 5, June 11, 1812. Message of James H. Blake, same, June 21, 1813.

[2] *Intelligencer*, July 17, 1813. [3] The same, July 19 and 22, 1813.

nial Beach. For the first time an attempt was made to provide defences for the city additional to Fort Washington. At Greenleaf Point the construction of earthworks was begun to mount a battery of heavy guns. Furnaces were also built to supply the guns with red-hot balls. Similar works were built near the navy yard.[1] In the course of a week after the vessels left the river, the soldiers returned to the city and their conduct was commended in an order issued by the commanding general of the militia.[2] For a time the citizens of Washington were freed from the apprehension of a visit from the British, whose ruthless course throughout the Chesapeake Bay region had aroused their wrath as well as their anxiety. The ordinary current of life was resumed in large part. The continued, and in English opinion the unaccountable and surprising, successes of the American navy stirred the citizens of the District in common with their fellow-citizens of the country with patriotic pride. When Commodore Bainbridge, "one of our most celebrated naval heroes," came to the city for a few days in the fall of 1813, a public dinner in his honor was given by the citizens of Georgetown, and only the shortness of his stay prevented a similar compliment from the citizens of Washington.[3] A few weeks later, when it was learned that Captain Perry of Lake Erie fame and the author of the phrase then on every lip, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," was coming to the city, a subscription paper for a public dinner at Tomlinson's Hotel was soon filled up.[4] The day of public humiliation and prayer set apart by action of congress in the fall of 1813 was observed in Washington by the suspension of all business. Services were held in the several churches, while at 12 o'clock the members of the grand and subordinate lodges of Masons of the District assembled at the Union lodge rooms on 11th Street, a short distance south of Pennsylvania Avenue. There they were met by officers of the government, of the army and navy and marine corps and citizens and strangers. A procession was formed which passed along Pennsylvania Avenue to the capitol, where an ora-

[1] *Intelligencer*, July 21, 1813.
[2] The same, July 29, 1813.
[3] The same, Nov. 25, 1813.
[4] The same, Jan. 26 and 27, 1814.

tion was delivered by John Wiley in commemoration of the heroism of Captain James Lawrence and his lieutenant, Augustus C. Ludlow, who lost their lives in the fight of the *Chesapeake*, and who were members of the order. The dying words of Lawrence, "Don't give up the ship," had thrilled his countrymen, even though he had gone down in defeat.[1] It is apparent one effect of the war at this period was an expansion of business. The Bank of the Metropolis of Washington and the Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Georgetown began their careers. A daily evening paper was started, so that the city at the opening of 1814 had two daily papers and Georgetown one. There was, as might naturally be expected, much travel to the city and many visitors whom business and expectation of business brought to the centre where the military and naval operations were directed and where the purchase of supplies of all sorts and the disbursement of large sums of money were decided upon. No doubt it was this condition that prompted the publication of the first guide book of the city, giving the lists of department officials and their chief clerks, bank directors, city officers, magistrates, etc.[2] Six months previously from the same publisher came the announcement, just published and for sale a north view of the president's house in aqua tinta. The price of this second known print of the president's house is given as fifty cents. There is no further record of it.[3] When

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 9, 1813. The lodges then in the District were Federal (founded 1793), Columbia (founded 1802), Naval (founded 1805), Union and Lebanon (founded 1811), Potomac in Georgetown (regarded as the successor of the lodge established in 1789) and the Alexandria-Washington and Alexandria-Brooke of Alexandria. The Grand Lodge of the District was established in 1811. In the year 1814 the Masons of the District numbered 250. History of the Grand Lodge and of Free Masonry in the District of Columbia.

[2] Davis Columbian Calendar. Price in paper 12½ cents, in boards, 25 cents. Published and for sale by J. Milligan & Co., booksellers, Georgetown. *Intelligencer*, Jan. 1, 1814. No copy of this book has been preserved as far as known. At the close of the year a similar publication by an out-of-town publisher was offered for sale, entitled, The Gentleman's Pocket Remembrancer for the Year 1813. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 30, 1814.

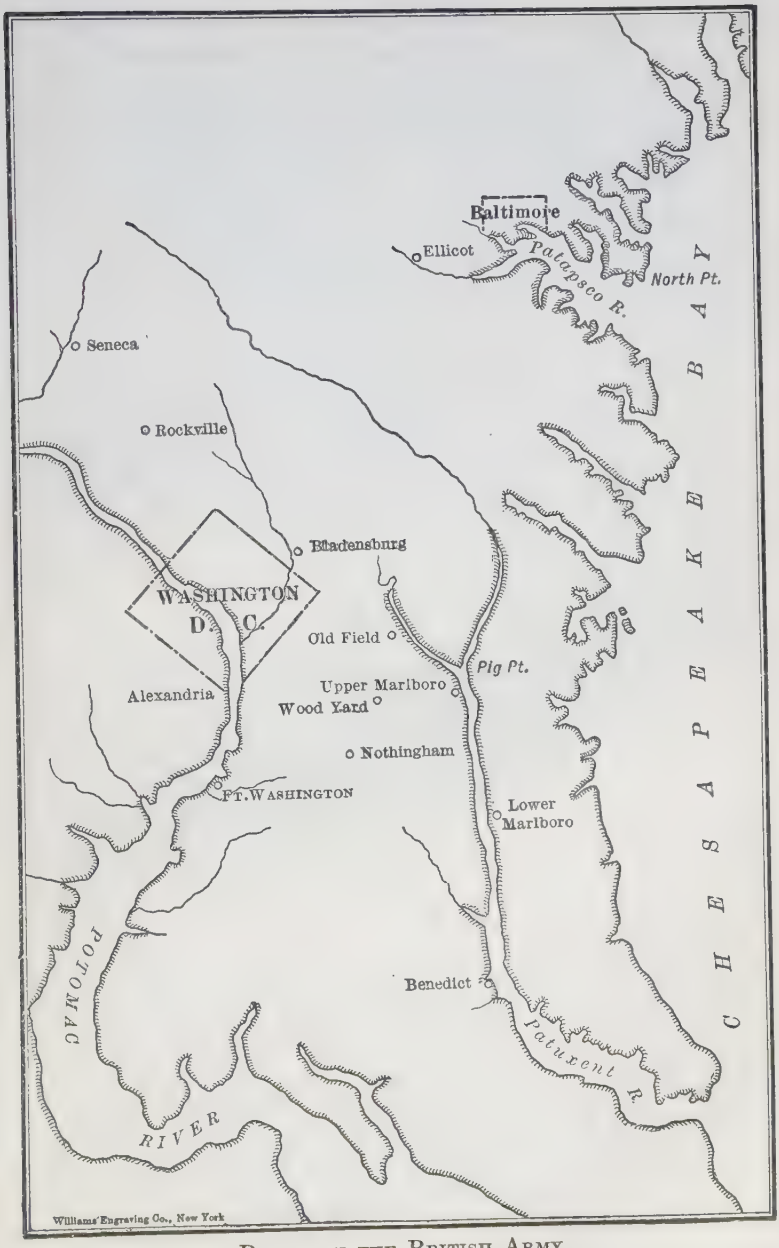
[3] *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1813. The first published representation of

congress met in the fall of 1813, in spite of the absorbing war questions, the editor of the *Intelligencer* took occasion to voice what he believed was the sentiment of all patriotic citizens, that the partially unfinished capitol building was a reproach to the nation. As it then stood, with the unsightly covered wooden passageway connecting the wings where the central portion of the structure was intended to be and amid surroundings entirely unimproved and still confused with the litter of building material, the editor was reminded of the splendid ruins of Roman grandeur as described by Volney.[1] In a little more than six months the capitol building, as well as all the other public structures, were literally in ruins. The disaster which had threatened the city for more than a year or since Admiral Cockburn's fleet had been cruising in Chesapeake Bay, had at last happened. The cautious march of the invading force from Benedict on the Patuxent, thirty-five miles southeast of the city, the rapid and thorough destruction of the public edifices and the hurried return to the vessels without stopping to plunder and burn as on all previous occasions, point clearly to the purpose of the expedition. This was on the 24th of August, 1814, but ever since the early part of June the inhabitants of the entire region from the Potomac to the Patuxent had been in a state of panic. Their apprehensions were well founded. At intervals stretching over a period of some ten weeks barges from the British fleet carried marauding parties up the Patuxent, and when they returned laden with plunder of all kinds of food supplies, they left behind a trail of burned villages, tobacco houses and farm-houses. There was no resistance. The inhabitants fled at their approach.

The motive of the enemy in going up an interior stream like the Patuxent, which ran parallel with and separated by some twenty miles or more on the east from the Potomac but extended farther south to its juncture with the Chesapeake Bay,

the president's house, also of the north front, formed the central feature of the engraved title-page of The Stranger in America, by Charles W. Janson, London, 1807. The author states this view was drawn by Mr. Birch, an American artist.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 2, 1813.




ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

was primarily to destroy the little fleet of gunboats of the American navy under the command of Captain Joshua Barney. As the only means of protection in the great extent of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries these small and slight vessels were inadequate, as they were unable to cope with the British men-of-war. They were chased from the bay and up into the Patuxent, and when the enemy continued its pursuit the American vessels took refuge in the shallower waters of St. Leonard's Bay, an arm of the Patuxent a few miles above its mouth.

During one of the intervals when the British ships had left the Patuxent, Barney's vessels slipped out of this place of safety, and passed up the Patuxent beyond Benedict, which was at the head of the ship navigation of the stream, to the vicinity of Nottingham. Here they were anchored, when on the 20th of August the British army, leaving their vessels at Benedict, fifteen miles from the mouth of the Patuxent, began that march which ended four days later in the battle of Bladensburg and the destruction of the city. But Captain Barney, finding that he was liable to capture, as Admiral Cockburn and a force of men in barges kept abreast of the columns of the land force, blew up his boats, and turning his sailors into a land force, joined the advance outpost of the American army at Old Fields, some seven miles east from Washington and at the intersection of two roads, one from Queen Ann on the Patuxent to the ferry opposite Alexandria and the other from upper Marlboro to Washington.

The only opposition the enemy encountered during the entire period from their first appearance in the Patuxent the early part of June to the last of August, when the troops returning from Washington were taken on board the vessels and sought a new field of conquest which Baltimore offered, occurred in the latter part of June, when some Maryland militia skirmished with the invaders at Benedict. The intelligence of the depredations of the enemy in June and July along the Patuxent, at Benedict and Nottingham, and covering quite a distance inland in Calvert County, was received in Washington with alarm.

It was not believed at this time before the British troops had arrived from Europe that a mere landing force of sailors would be marched as far away from their vessels as Washington. Then again the secretary of war did not believe the enemy would come to Washington, as it was not important enough. Baltimore, he thought, was of more consequence. In fact, it was not until the first of July, after information had been received that English troops employed in the operations against Napoleon, now that hostilities had ceased, would be sent to America, that military preparations for the protection of the city were begun in earnest. But this was only about six weeks prior to its destruction.[1] In addition to a lack of appreciation of the gravity of the situation, as well as a lack of military ability on the part of the authorities, there was also a great scarcity of money. With the treasury empty and a great debt and the need of meeting the war demands, the administration about a week later decided upon an extra session of congress to meet in September for the purpose of providing for the financial extremity of the government. A few weeks before the enemy reached the city the government was in such straits for money that an offer was made by John P. Van Ness, representing the banks of the District, to provide a loan for the defence of the city. It was favorably received, but the details were not arranged until the imminence of the danger made further progress impossible. In fact, the only defensive works provided at this time near the city were some earthworks on the west side of the Eastern Branch, commanding the approach to the bridge at Bladensburg, which were built by the volunteer labor of citizens of Washington.[2] Fort Washington was in an unfinished state, while the earthworks at Greenleaf Point and at the navy yard were not manned, and there were no naval vessels in the vicinity. When the military authorities began to bestir them-

[1] At that time Washington was made a part of the new military district No. 10, under command of General W. H. Winder, who a month later established his headquarters in the city.

[2] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 582. In the confusion of the day of the battle the principal earthwork was not made use of.

selves to provide for even the contingency of an attack on the city, the entire effort was directed to securing a militia force from the adjoining states to be used in connection with the District militia. This reliance placed upon troops furnished by the state governors differed in no respect from the course pursued in securing a military force on the Canadian border. What proved to be a vital defect in the plan for Washington and contributed to the disastrous failure was the policy of not calling out the troops until a serious attack was menaced. As one result of hurrying troops into the field, they appeared on the day of battle exhausted and worn by long marches in the hot weather and lack of proper food and shelter.

The same course was pursued earlier in calling out the District militia. On these occasions in June and July the District militia either in whole or in part was summoned for active service. The first call was revoked when intelligence was received that the enemy having come up the Patuxent to Benedict had retired.[1] Four days later came the alarming intelligence that the enemy had appeared at Nottingham, which is on a line about parallel with Fort Washington but some twenty-two miles from Washington. A force of 280 men under the command of Major George Peter marched to the front and reached Benedict. The enemy had disappeared. The troops were ordered home, and after a ten days' service were mustered out.[2] The apprehension of the public mind at this juncture may be judged by a notice in the *Intelligencer* calling a meeting of the clergy of the city to consider the propriety of setting apart a day for prayer and fasting, "the reasons for which are obvious."[3] In a little more than two weeks the enemy was again reported in the Patuxent. Three companies of militia under command of Captain Davidson were called out.[4] After marching as far as Woodyard, a short distance east of Upper

[1] *Federal Republican*, June 6 and June 18, 1814.

[2] *Intelligencer*, June 20, 1814. Upon their return home the soldiers were given a banquet by the citizens in Parrott's Woods. *Federal Republican*, July 1, 1814.

[3] *Intelligencer*, June 29, 1814.

[4] The same, July 19, 1814.

Marlboro, and twelve miles from Washington, reports were received that the enemy had retired, and the troops returned to their homes and were discharged after nine days' service.[1] On the day the military companies left the city on the last occasion, the city council was called in special session by the mayor to consider the defenceless condition of the city, and a committee was appointed to call on the president of the United States and urge that some measures be adopted.[2] The mayor was also authorized to appoint a committee of vigilance. A similar committee from the town of Alexandria had represented to the military authorities the situation of that place as without means of defence. The mayor of Georgetown, Captain John Peter, who was also in command of a military company and had recently gone out with his command, called on the president with the mayor of Washington and made similar representations. Even at this time reliance continued to be placed on securing an adequate military force when the occasion arose. As the events proved this expectation was disappointing. Even when the District militia was called out for a brief service the provision of arms and ammunition, tents and food, was insufficient. In the earlier tours of duty, complaints were made of these deficiencies.[3] On the last alarm prior to the invasion, when the District militia went into camp four miles from the Eastern Branch Bridge, Saturday, August 20th, their first night out, many of the soldiers were compelled to lie out in the open owing to the lack of tents.[4] At that time 4000 British regulars had landed at Benedict, and the next day began the march to the city. But only a few of the militia from the adjoining states had made their appearance at Bladensburg, where it was expected the attempt to enter the city would be made unless, as it was considered, they might turn off and march

[1] *Intelligencer*, July 25 and 28, 1814.

[2] The committee was composed of the mayor, Dr. James H. Blake, Elias B. Caldwell, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Buller Cocke, Walter Jones, Jr., and Thomas Munroe. Vol. 4, Journal of the Common Council, July 18, 1814. *Intelligencer*, July 26, 1814.

[3] *Federal Republican*, June 20, 1814.

[4] American State Papers, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 564.

against Fort Washington or else approach the city by way of one of the Eastern Branch bridges. About noon on Sunday the day after the troops of the city marched off in defence of their homes, the mayor issued a call for all able-bodied citizens remaining in the city, and as illustrating the extremity of the need he included also all free men of color, to meet the next day at the capitol and from thence go to Bladensburg and throw up breastworks.[1] The response was a generous one, and between four and five hundred men met and were supplied with picks and shovels and spent the day in providing, forty-eight hours before the battle, the only defences which were available in that locality. The intervening Sunday was perhaps the least restful that Washington had ever known. The terror of the name of the ruthless British soldiery was universal, and added to that was the prospect of the loss of loved ones then with the forces of defence. A feverish bustle of preparation to leave their homes and save as much property as possible pervaded the entire city. Books and papers in the executive departments were packed by the clerks, and as rapidly as conveyances could be procured were sent out of the city. The archives of the state department, placed in linen bags, were sent to Leesburg, Va., and stored in a vacant house.[2]

On Monday, August 22, there was a general exodus from the city and Georgetown and by Tuesday evening very few women and children remained.[3] By Wednesday when the battle of Bladensburg occurred, the public offices were closed, and all business was at a standstill.[4] The president and the members of his cabinet spent most of these days on horseback, riding between General Winder's camp and the city. They spent the night of Monday, Aug. 22, at Old Fields, and the following

[1] Reprinted from *Washington City Gazette* in Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), Aug. 26, 1814.

[2] Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.

[3] Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 98. Dr. Blake, the mayor of the city, stated two days after the invasion that nine-tenths of the inhabitants were away. *Intelligencer*, Sept. 10, 1814.

[4] Manuscript Diary of Mrs. Thornton. Library of Congress.

morning at sunrise a cabinet council was held.[1] Mrs. Madison, left alone in the president's house, busied herself in superintending the placing of the cabinet papers in trunks so as to fill one carriage. A guard of a hundred men, procured by one of her friends, presumably Charles Carroll of Bellvue, was stationed on Tuesday about the house.[2]

In the meantime the British troops slowly but surely were approaching the city. They met with no opposition in their march. On reaching Upper Marlboro on Wednesday, August 22, sixteen miles from Washington, there lay between them and Washington via the Eastern Branch Bridge, the American forces of about twenty-five hundred, which on that day had been strengthened by the coming of Captain Barney and six hundred sailors from the flotilla which they had blown up the previous day by order of the commander. The Americans had advanced as far as Woodyard, and had then fallen back to Old Fields, some seven miles from Washington.

Tuesday evening a further withdrawal was ordered, as it was feared the enemy might approach the city from that direction rather than by Bladensburg, and so the men were hurried back to the city and formed on the city side of the bridge. The following morning, Wednesday, August 24, the enemy took the road to Bladensburg, and about two o'clock that afternoon their red coats were seen as the lines passed through the village to the bridge. On the other side of the Eastern Branch the Americans were posted, numbering some three thousand men. The steady advance of the British veterans and their use of rockets threw the American line into confusion and it gave way. In the meantime General Winder had brought his force from the city which formed a second line. Just where the Bladensburg road crossed the District line, Captain Barney and his sailors brought their guns into action and made the most effective resistance which the enemy encountered.[3] But the little

[1] Affidavit of Tench Ringgold. 21st Cong., 1st Sess., House No. 276, March 6, 1830.

[2] Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison, p. 108.

[3] The city council, by an act approved Oct. 18, 1814, appropriated a sum not to exceed $300 to procure a sword "as a testimony of their

artillery force was soon surrounded and its intrepid leader became a prisoner. Before the second line, formed mainly of the District militia, got into the fight, the order was given by General Winder to retreat. By four o'clock in the afternoon a confused mass of soldiers and horses and wagons filled the road that led to the city. The men, exhausted before the battle began, felt the effect of the intense heat of the day and of the excitement. The force of some six thousand scattered over the country, some through the city and Georgetown to Wisconsin Avenue and others over the old Bladensburg Road and then by the Rock Creek Church Road. General Winder was followed by a large number through the city, and that night made camp on the River Road, five miles north of Tenleytown. The next day the journey was continued to Rockville, sixteen miles north of Washington, and thence still farther north to the Frederick Road and then to Baltimore.

The British also felt the exhaustion of the heat and of the march, and when their foes retired they rested for a couple of hours and then took up the march to the city, which they reached about dusk. A camp was formed in the extreme eastern section of the city, while a detachment under command of General Ross, accompanied by Admiral Cockburn, rode down Maryland Avenue. At the northwest corner of that thoroughfare with 2d Street, N. E., they were greeted with a fusilade from the house of Robert Sewall. The horse General Ross was riding was killed, and the house was ordered to be burned, which was done. About eight o'clock the capitol was reached, and was set on fire, and about eleven o'clock a detachment passed up Pennsylvania Avenue to the president's house, which was destroyed.

While the capitol was burning, Captain Tingey, carrying out the orders of the secretary of the navy, set the buildings in the navy yard on fire. The Eastern Branch Bridge had been blown up a short time before. The upper bridge was also destroyed, as well as the Potomac Bridge, but the latter was not done until the next day, when the corporal in charge of the

respect for the gallantry and intrepidity displayed by himself and the officers and men under his command." Also *Intelligencer*, Oct. 1, 1814.

guard set on fire the Virginia end while the British applied the torch to the city end.

The French minister, M. Serurier, had remained in the city. He was living in the Octagon House at the northeast corner of New York Avenue and 18th Street, N. W.[1] About eleven o'clock that night M. Serurier saw a detachment of soldiers with torches coming towards the president's house. He sent a messenger with a letter to the officer in command, asking that a guard be furnished to protect his house. "My messenger," writes Serurier to Talleyrand,[2] "found General Ross in the White House,[3] where he was collecting in the drawing room [the Blue Room] all the furniture to be found and preparing to set it on fire."

General Ross sent assurances that "the king's house" would be protected.

A violent thunderstorm with rain served to check the flames. The following morning detachments of soldiers were sent through the city and the war and treasury offices were burned and also the arsenal at Greenleaf Point, where an explosion of gunpowder killed about one hundred of the invaders. The rope walks of Ringgold, Heath and Co., and of John Chalmers in the immediate vicinity were destroyed. The hotel building at A Street, and Delaware Avenue, N. E., owned by Daniel Carroll and occupied by B. H. Tomlinson and the two houses built by General Washington on the west side of North Capitol Street, between B and C streets, were also destroyed.[4] How-

[1] He had succeeded as tenant Paul Hamilton, secretary of the navy, who resigned that position in 1813. His successor, William Jones, was at that time living in one of the Peter Houses on K St., between 26th and 27th streets, N. W.

[2] Quoted in Adams's History, Vol. 8, p. 145.

[3] The use of that term by the French minister indicates that it was generally employed at that time. The same inference may be drawn from the use of the term in a letter signed Publius, addressed to the president, printed in the *Federal Republican*, Nov. 4, 1814. The latter is the first appearance in print as far as known of this designation which is now the official title of the president's house.

[4] A plausible explanation of this act is to be found in the statement of Patrick Magruder, clerk of the house, that in the haste of removing the records of the house by the house officials some were stored in

ever, as the *Intelligencer* stated, "greater respect was certainly paid to private property than has commonly been exhibited by the enemy in his marauding parties." [1] The general explanation given of the failure to exempt private property entirely is that in some way the British officers were misinformed both as to the ownership and the uses of the property destroyed, while it is also stated the hotel building was set on fire by embers from the capitol. The office of the *Intelligencer* on Pennsylvania Avenue, just west of 6th Street, was included, because from there was issued the organ of the administration. Through the personal appeal of Dr. William Thornton, the superintendent of the Patent Office, the building at the northeast corner of 8th and E streets, N. W., occupied by the post-office department as well as the patent office, was saved.[2] On the afternoon of the second day after the coming of the enemy a tornado struck the city which did great damage, blowing off the roofs of houses and destroying chimneys. That evening, leaving their camp fires burning in the eastern portion of the city, the invading force marched away and passing through Bladensburg where a hospital of their wounded was left to the care of the citizens, a rapid march was made to Benedict, where the ships were boarded.

The result of the battle in killed and wounded as officially reported by General Ross was 64 killed and 185 wounded, while the total for the Americans was 26 killed and 51 wounded. More than 100 wounded were left behind, while a committee of citizens buried about 200.[3] A hospital was opened in Carroll Row on 1st Street, E., opposite the capitol grounds by Dr. James Ewell, a practising physician whose office and residence was at that time in the south building of the row.

A short time before the American soldiers in retreat poured

the Washington buildings. Annals of Congress, 13th Cong., 3d Sess., Jan. 23, 1815, p. 1100.

[1] Sept. 1, 1814.

[2] *Intelligencer*, May 8, 1814.

[3] The same, Sept. 1, 1814. Gleig, an English officer who accompanied the expedition, in his book, The Subaltern in America, gives the total British loss as five hundred.

into the city, Mrs. Madison, having secured such property as could be carried, including a portrait of General Washington, which was cut from the frame, left the White House. She went through Georgetown, and that night slept in a camp of soldiers with a guard about her tent. The next day she crossed the river into Virginia, where she remained two days and on the third, which was Sunday, August 28, she returned to the city where she rejoined the president, who had gotten back the previous day. The wanderings of the president during the three days he had been away had covered quite a wide circuit. He accompanied the marching columns to the scene of battle, and leaving before the rout became general, he reached the White House a few hours after Mrs. Madison went away. Then in company with Mr. Jones, the secretary of the navy, and Mr. Rush, the attorney-general, he hurried from the house, and crossing the Potomac at Masons Ferry travelled through Virginia, stopping the first night at a farmhouse about ten miles from Washington. From there he passed north, and then crossing the Potomac went to Rockville and thence to Brookville six miles north of Rockville, with the view of meeting General Winder.[1] He spent that night at Brookville, and the next day he went to Washington, reaching the capital city Saturday afternoon, August 27.[2] The next day Mrs. Madison came from her retreat in Virginia and the president, leaving the house of Mr. Rush, where he had been a guest, found his wife at the home of Richard Cutts, Mrs. Madison's brother-in-law. At that time Mr. Cutts was superintendent general of military supplies and was living in the house on the site of 1333–1335 F Street, N. W., which Mr. Madison occupied while secretary of state.[3] Mr. Madison was accompanied the latter part of his journey by a cavalry guard under the command of Colonel Armistead T. Mason, and on his return to Washington a guard was maintained about his house. At night, as the troops were without tents, they slept on straw spread on the street before

[1] Adams's History, Vol. 8, p. 150.
[2] The First Forty Years of Washington Society, p. 107.
[3] Mrs. Thornton's Manuscript Diary.

the door. The temporary White House was continued in the F Street house some ten days and then President and Mrs. Madison removed to the house of Colonel Tayloe[1] which had a few days previously been given up by the French minister, who had removed to Philadelphia.[2] Before the end of the next month the Russian minister had also changed his residence to Philadelphia.[3] The ministers from Holland and Sweden had gone elsewhere, while Spain's representative had never had a home in Washington. The diplomatic corps had only five members, none of whom in the season of 1814–1815 lived at the nation's capital.[4]

The city was still threatened by the enemy, for at the time of the president's return, a portion of the British fleet under command of Captain Gordon ascending the Potomac had reached Fort Washington. The garrison under command of Captain S. T. Dyson, of the artillery corps of the army, without making any resistance, blew up the fortifications and abandoned them. The sound of the explosion was heard in the city, and when on Monday, August 29, the hostile vessels anchored before the town of Alexandria, a number of the citizens of Washington fled. There was talk of making terms with the enemy in the event the city was attacked, but the president declined to consider such a proposition.[5]

The next day the troops of Georgetown were drawn up in line along the river front in anticipation of the hostile approach.[6] However, after remaining in front of Alexandria for four days and loading the vessels with flour, tobacco, cotton, wine and sugar from the warehouses, the vessels dropped down the river, and after running through a fusillade from guns hastily stationed at various points, finally reached the bay.[7] The city continued

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 9, 1814.
[2] Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 5, 1814.
[3] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 28, 1814.
[4] The same, Feb. 25, 1815.
[5] Mrs. Thornton's Manuscript Diary. Also Adams's History, Vol. 8, p. 151.
[6] *Federal Republican*, Aug. 30, 1814. Reprinted in Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser*, September 2.
[7] Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 6, 1814.

to have a martial air. A relay of vedettes or mounted messengers was maintained along the roads between Washington and Baltimore and Richmond to bring to the war office the latest intelligence of the movements of the enemy. Mr. Monroe, who was also the secretary of war, as well as secretary of state, had his office in his house on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 20th and 21st streets, while in the Western Market house, directly in front of his residence, a company of vedettes was stationed.[1]

Two days before the invading force left Alexandria a beginning was made towards a resumption of the public business. Workmen were engaged in repairing the damage caused by the storm to the roof of the post-office department, the only public building that escaped the British torch.[2] Then on the day following the withdrawal of the British vessels, and nine days after the invasion of the city, directions were given to have the models removed from the room they occupied in that building, so as to make a place for the sessions of congress which had been called to meet on the 19th of September, a little more than two weeks later.[3] As a preliminary to the necessary changes in the interior of the building the post-office department was removed to a rented building on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, just west of 9th Street, N. W.[4] No change was made in the quarters of the city post-office, which continued to occupy rooms in the building after congress convened.[5] The other executive offices were located in private houses rented for the use of the government mostly in the vicinity of

[1] Affidavit of Tench Ringgold. 21st Cong., 1st Sess., House No. 276. March 6, 1830.

[2] Mrs. Thornton's Manuscript Diary, Aug. 31, 1814.

[3] The same, Sept. 3, 1814.

[4] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 12, 1812. Notice of the location of the clerk of the circuit court in the building adjoining that occupied by the post-office department.

[5] The city post-office, after occupying for a period a rented building on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 17th and 18th streets, upon leaving the southwest executive building in the year 1810, had in the fall of 1811 found a home again in a government building when the Blodgett Hotel was purchased and fitted up for the use of the post-office department and patent office. Coll. Hist. Soc., Vol. 6, p. 168.

the White House. In a house on the south side of G between 17th and 18th streets, the state department resumed business, while the general land office found quarters on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 17th and 18th streets. The war department was located on the north side of F Street, adjoining on the east the corner of 15th Street, and the accountant's office was on the same street between 12th and 13th streets. The navy department was housed in the Seven Buildings, on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 19th and 20th streets. On the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, between 20th and 21st streets, in a house adjoining the one occupied as a residence by James Monroe, secretary of state, was the office of the register of the treasury, Joseph Nourse, and next to it was the Franklin House, where the treasury department was located.[1]

The office of pay and deposit of the Bank of Columbia, the fiscal agent of the government in Washington, two weeks after the invasion of the city, was opened for the transaction of business in the west building of the row of the Seven Buildings. A week after the enemy entered the city the *Intelligencer*, with borrowed type, had been able to resume publication, but with a smaller sheet. The *Federal Republican* also again appeared.

A further resumption of the interrupted current of community life was witnessed when the usual session of the circuit court was held in November, 1814, in Alexandria, and the next term in Washington in December. It is supposed the court met in "Mr. Carroll's house," near the capitol, probably on B Street, east of Delaware Avenue, N. E., as it did the following June,[2] and also again that fall. When the supreme court met for its annual session in February, 1815, its sittings were held "in the house taken for the accommodation of the supreme court on Capitol Hill," as was the case the following year.[3]

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 9, 1814, and later issues. Also the same for May 7, 1816, in advertisement of William O'Neale offering the house for sale or rent, as "the Treasury has removed."

[2] The same, June 8, 1815.

[3] The same, Feb. 6, 1815. According to a statement in "Elias Boudinot Caldwell, a sketch" by his granddaughter, Hallie L. Wright (n. p. n. d.), this house was the residence of Mr. Caldwell, the clerk of the

Some weeks passed before the city was free from the presence of armed men. Companies were camped in various sections of the city and vicinity,[1] while at Camp Hill at 23d and E streets, N. W., an armed force was maintained.[2] In addition to the loss sustained by the citizens due to the suspension of all business and the interference with the usual course of community life, their feelings were outraged by the comments made on the affair at Bladensburg, which was given the name of the "Bladensburg Races," a term which stuck. It was especially irritating and mortifying to read in the newspaper accounts that the District soldiery had shown the white feather on that day. These slanders were refuted in a letter written by General Winder to Brigadier-General Walter Smith in command of the District troops,[3] while the mayor of the city called attention to these misrepresentations in his message to the city council.[4] The interests of the citizens were assailed in a more vital point, for two days after Congress assembled, the *Intelligencer* informed the community that "we hear some indistinct suggestions buzzed abroad of a design to endeavor, in consequence of recent events, to remove the seat of government temporarily or permanently from this place."[5] A week later the "indistinct suggestions" were given definite form by the introduction in the house of a resolution providing for the temporary removal of the seat of government to some other place that was safer and more comfortable until such a time as the public edifices were rebuilt, when congress and the public offices were to be established again in Washington.[6]

It soon became apparent there was a good deal of scepticism about the temporary character of the proposed removal, which was increased when three days after the resolution had been introduced in the house and referred to a committee and before a report had been made, offers were received from the common

court, which is still standing and known as 204–206 Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E.

[1] *Intelligencer*, Sept. 16, 1814.

[2] The same, Oct. 6, 1814.

[3] The same, Oct. 8, 1814.

[4] Journal Bd. of Alder., Vol. 5, Sept. 22, 1814.

[5] Sept. 21, 1814.

[6] Annals of Congress, 13th Cong., 3d Sess., p. 312.

councils of the city of Philadelphia and of Lancaster, Pa., placing at the disposal of congress buildings in those places. The committee brought in an adverse report, which was rejected by the house, and a report directed to be made providing for a removal. The temporary character of the change was again maintained, and in the course of the debate it was proposed to fill in the blanks left for the name of the temporary seat of government by inserting Philadelphia. The name of Georgetown was also proposed. Some ten days prior to the appearance of this nearby rival, as stated in a letter from Georgetown, printed in the *Baltimore Telegraph*, and reprinted without comment in the *Intelligencer*,[1] the corporation of Georgetown had taken formal action and had offered for the use of congress the building of Georgetown College.[2] The writer mentioned as an inducement for a favorable consideration of Georgetown, "that board for the members will be provided in the town at ten dollars per week instead of sixteen dollars as charged by Washington hotels."

The chief argument advanced in favor of removal was the defenceless condition of the city and the liability of another attack from the enemy. At the same time there was not lacking the appeal to the patriotic pride of the members not to be driven from the city, for as one of the speakers exclaimed, he would rather sit under canvass in the city than remove one mile out of it to a palace. Still the inconvenience and discomfort of the members of the house was undoubtedly great, for if the entire membership of one hundred and seventy-six had been present there would not have been seats enough in the room they were then occupying, "although every spot up to the fireplaces and windows is occupied."[3] Fortunately for the dignity of the nation and incidentally the peace of mind of the citizens, the house in the course of three weeks decided against removal, and in favor of rebuilding the public buildings

[1] Oct. 3, 1814.

[2] Resolution of the Georgetown council. *Intelligencer*, Oct. 5, 1814.

[3] Annals of Congress, 13th Cong., 3d Sess., p. 353. Nineteen members were absent, so that one hundred and fifty-seven had seats.

on the same sites, accepting the offer of the banks of the District to loan to the government half a million of dollars for this purpose. Three months passed before, with the concurrence of the senate, the bill became law.[1] The offer of the District banks was a practical voicing of the sentiment of the citizens on the question, perhaps more effective than the memorial protesting against removal adopted at a mass meeting.[2] A further manifestation of public spirit was shown soon after the house had disposed of the removal question, when the city council adopted resolutions providing for the appointment of committees in each ward to solicit contributions of money and labor in the construction of such works of defence on the Potomac as the general government may direct.[3] In a few days, owing to the contributions from citizens of Washington and of Alexandria, the plans for the restoration of Fort Washington prepared by Major Charles Pierre L'Enfant were under way. No doubt the references on the floor of the house to the defenceless condition of the city, as well as the continuance of the war, for the news of the signing of the treaty of Ghent was not received in this country until after the middle of February, 1815, accounts for the promptness with which the work was begun. At the same time this incident brings out in a striking way the financial resources of the government, when public works of defence were built at private expense. During this period too the city council made an appropriation for making sidewalks of gravel between the temporary capitol and the principal centres where the hotels and boarding houses were grouped. These were McKeowin's or Davis Tavern, Pennsylvania Avenue and 6th Street, the vicinity of Pennsylvania

[1] The vote in the house proved to be a close one, and the following analysis of it appeared in the *Intelligencer*, Oct. 18, 1816, indicating that politics was a strong influence.

| | For Removal | Against Removal |
|---|---|---|
| Republicans | 30 | 74 |
| Federalists | 24 | 9 |
| | 54 | 83 |

[2] *Intelligencer*, Oct. 10, 1814.

[3] The same, Nov. 2 and 3 and 9, 1814. Bd. of Alder., Vol. 5, Oct. 31, 1814.

Avenue and 9th Street, the Washington Hotel or McLeod's, Pennsylvania Avenue, between 14th and 15th streets, and the vicinity of 15th and F streets.[1] The day after the house had decided against removal, the consideration was begun of Mr. Jefferson's offer to sell his library to replace the one destroyed by the burning of the capitol. Before congress ended that session, a bill providing for the purchase of the library had become a law. The office of librarian was for the first time separated from the office of clerk of the house and George Watterston was appointed the first librarian of congress. By the following July the books had been forwarded from Monticello and were being arranged on shelves in a room in the third story of the post-office department building.[2] In this building a few days after congress adjourned in March, were established the offices of John P. Van Ness, Richard Bland Lee and Tench Ringgold, the three commissioners appointed by the president to have charge of the rebuilding of the public edifices. While the contractors and material supply men were coming to the building to see about what was needed in way of work and materials, and while Mr. Watterston was unpacking the Jefferson library, a force of workmen began in the month of July to tear down the old Tunnicliff Tavern building on A Street, just east of 1st Street, N. E., while others were turning up the ground of the vacant lots to the west and preparing for the foundations of the building which was ready for the use of congress the following December. The garden along the 1st Street front, planted and cultivated all the season, was now destroyed, so that the next session of congress assembled in a building on a site where less than six months before a garden bloomed.[3] The erection of this building, the largest up to that

[1] Jour. Bd. of Alder., Vol. 5, Sept. 22, 1814. At a dinner given at McKeowin's Hotel by the citizens of the District to the secretary of the navy, William Jones, who had resigned that office, the Star-Spangled Banner was sung for the first time in Washington. *Intelligencer*, Dec. 14, 1814. The lines appeared in the *Intelligencer*, Nov. 26, 1814, taken from a Baltimore paper.

[2] History of Library of Congress, p. 67.

[3] *Intelligencer*, Dec. 12, 1815.

time built by private enterprise, was due to the public spirit of thirty-eight citizens, who formed a stock company, and by the sale of stock at $100 per share raised $17,362.[1] The new structure, which stood on the northeast corner of 1st and A streets, occupied only a portion of the building site acquired by the company. It was three stories in height, with a high-pitched roof. The principal entrance was through a wide-arched door from 1st Street, and above was a large window opening. The senate chamber on the first floor was forty-five feet long and fifteen feet wide, while the room occupied by the house was on the second floor, and its dimensions were seventy-five by forty-five feet with a gallery. Brick was the material used in the walls, and the entire cost was $25,000, not including $5000 for special fittings for the use of congress, paid from the public treasury. The rent was fixed on a basis of six per cent on the cost of the building, with an allowance for insurance, so that the annual payment was $1650.[2]

[1] The owners of the old tavern property, Moses Young, Henry Ingle and E. B. Caldwell, accepted stock to the value of $4612 in payment.

[2] Daniel Carroll of Duddington held 20 shares, Thomas Law 15, Griffith Coombe and William Brent, 10, William Emack, Robert Brent, William D. Digges, Charles Carroll of Bellevue, Henry Ingle and Benjamin Burns, 5 each, James D. Barry 4½, John C. Dixon 4, B. G. Orr, Alexander McCormick and Frederick May, 3 each, Daniel Brent, Daniel Rapine, Gilbert Docker and Samuel Eliot, 2 each, James Young, Thomas Claxton, Benjamin Burch, Nicholas L. Queen, Francis Pic, I. S. Middleton, Henry Burford, John Coyle, Adam Lindsay, Thomas Foyles, Samuel N. Smallwood, Kane and Love, and John Carns, 1 each, Charles Glover and Overton Carr, ½ share each. The above, in addition to the three owners of the old tavern property, were the original stockholders. From the manuscript record book of the company in the possession of Mrs. Frederic L. Moore.

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